

THE
Saints Care

FOR
Church-Communion.

Declared in sundry

SERMONS

Preached at

St James Duke's-Place.

In which is plainly explained,

{	The Church the Object	}	Care for Church- Communion.
	Communion and Care the Act		
	Cogent Reasons perswading		
	to it		
{	Causeless Separation the Op-	}	
	posite, of		

By ZECH. CROFTON, Studious of
Purity in Unity.

Beza Epist. 2. *Gravissime nimirum, & in semet ipsos & in fratres peccantes, qui navis istius, aut (si navis) corruptelæ, & suæ & aliorum conscientias perturbant, perinde ac si de Christianismo semel oblato ageretur. Sed vitia à vitis, & quæ condonanda sunt Christianæ charitati, ab iis quæ prorsus sunt execranda, prudenter distinguenda esse censeo; idque non ex Carnis, sed Spiritûs prudentiâ.*

LONDON, Printed in the year 1671.

THE
Saints Care

ДОТ

Church-Commission.

Declared in conformity

SEYMOUR

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St James Duke's Place.

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Canals separation the Op-
to it
Cognate Reasons for
Communion and Care the A
The Church the Object

1671 to, analog

By SECY. 674102
Terry in Unit.

non est curis sed solius pietatis



To the Right Honourable
Sir Samuel Starling, Knight,
Lord Mayor of the

CITY of LONDON.

Right Honourable,

THE ensuing Tract can
seek no other Patron
among men, but your
Lordship; for as much as you
gave opportunity to its beeing;
whilst poor I have been expo-
sed to the misapprehensions of
men, your Lordship hath had
the

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the honour to apprehend me
right: whilst some would re-
present me an *Enemy* to the
King, your Lordship hath
been sensible of my *constant, sin-*
cere Loyalty; whilst some would
suppose me the *Head* and *Ad-*
vocate of Faction; your Ho-
nour hath known me an *Enemy*
to all *Faction* Civil or Religi-
ous. And although on some
prudential Reasons, I (not in-
hibited by any *Law*) did for
some time *silence my self*, and
not so frequently exercise my
Ministry as I might have done;
your Lordship, knowing the
Law did not restrain me, often
solli-

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solicited me not to hide the Talent God had given me, and continue a reproach on the Church, as if *they had silenced me*; but to use my liberty in the Service of God and his Church; and to that end your Lordship was pleased to open me a *door of utterance*, whereby the ensuing Discourse was spoken for the instruction of God's People, in a duty of great *importance and necessity*, in an Evil Day.

Your Lordship hath expressed much zeal to the *restraint*

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of *Schism*; and thereby been exposed to much *Rage* and *Reproach* of the discontented Party. But I well know, your Lordship's prudent *Reasoning* with some grand Leaders of that persecuted Way, in order to their *conviction*, at least to a desistance from so open *Affronts to Authority*, (which constrained the severity of prosecution:) and your Lordship's *mildness* and *moderation* in the execution of the Law on many persons in your hands, might engage more respect to your Honour.

The

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(The Reverend Bishop might
(as St. *Augustine* *Aust. Epist. 60, 61*
did, in the behalf
of *Hippo*, incite *Cecilian*, the
President of *Africa*, to use the
Sword against the *Donatists*)
provoke your Lordship's pro-
secution of those whose *Schism*
is the trouble of *London*, yea
of *England*: yet your Lord-
ship's Actions did plainly inti-
mate his Grave Advice to
have been as *Austin's*, *Provi-*
debit ut tumor sacrilegie vani-
tatis, terrendo sanetur; potius
quam ulciscendo refecetur: Yet I
founded no Alarum; but, as a
Presbyter, did only (accor-
ding

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ding to my Place and Duty) use the Word of the Lord, to dehort his people from so great *Iniquity*; and excite the contrary *Duty*, in maintaining the *Unity* of the Church.

What I spake to some, is now exposed to the view of all, to *silence* Clamours, and *satisfie* such, who did not so well and distinctly understand what was spoken. And the whole is presented to your Lordship's Patronage. Sir, That God may make you as *sincere* in *Piety*, as you are supposed to be *zealous* against *Schism*,

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Schism, is the hearty and constant prayer of,

Septemb. 27.

1670.

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obliged

and devoted Servant,

ZEC. CROFTON.

The Epistle Decembris.
Schism is the hearty and con-
stant prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obliged

and devoted servant,

Wm. Croft.



on of the Church; yes, and that before you

To the Courteous

READER.

Epecially,

The Non-communicating

NON-CONFORMISTS.

ed the talents of their Centuries, and de-

Friends,

BE so courteous, as to read before
you cast away this Book, and cast
your censure on it, or the Author.

Let not the Author's Name, and
design of the Work, raise in you *Passion*
and *Prejudice*, to obstruct your own infor-
mation, conviction, and salvation. It is an
easie thing to censure; but not so easie to
shun the guilt of calumniating, slandering,
and false accusation; and to answer it to a
Righteous God.

I am

The Epistle

I am not insensible how some of you were displeased at, and deeply censured my *Reformation, not Separation*; though written to apologize my own practice in the communion of the Church; yea, and that before you had read it. I know I have too much cause to complain, *Many that are angry at that Book, have not read it to this day*. If your Consciences be truly scrupulous and tender, it is the least you can do, to read what pretends to inform and resolve your doubts.

Some Reverend Brethren Dr. R. Dr. Mr. E. C. (now with God) having read that Piece, repented the rashness of their Censures, and declared; *The Mind of God, and Duty of a Christian*, was therein asserted and pleaded for: *Go you, and do likewise*. At least, treat this Tract with more care and kindness; if not to me and the Church, yet to your own Souls: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God: *your Breach of Charity* (the very form and soul of Schism) is most manifest in the Separatists, by their rash Censures, unseemly Calumnies, reviling Speeches, raging Reproaches, and vilifying Invectives, with which they

To the Reader.

they follow any that reproveh their folly, and endeavour their conviction. How did the *Donatists* rage at, and revile *Jerom* and *St. Austin*? With what Calumnies did the *Brownists* pursue the *Judicious Ball*, even when dead; constraining his surviving Friends to wipe them off? And have not our eyes seen, and ears heard the raging *Invectives* and *Reproaches* acted by the Independent *Congregationalists* against the serious *Edwards*, and learned *Cranford*? How many mouths are now opened against the *Pious Baxter*, by reason of his *Cure for Church-divisions*, which were lately the loud Trumpets of his *Piety*?

It is well known I have drunk deep of this Cup; I now expect a much deeper draught; but resigned to the will of my Heavenly Father, resolve to drink it cheerfully, as partaker of the Cross of Christ: Only think you of answering that serious Question, *Am I become your Enemy*, because I tell you the very truth? I am resolved

Omnes Hæretici se detestantur; & me pari persequuntur odio, ut quos gladiis nequeunt voto interficiant.
Aust. Epist. 25.

See the Epistle of Langley, Rath, and Ash, Woodcock, Cross, before Ball's Answer to Cas.

ved

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ved herein to testifie I love you, though the more I love you, the less I am loved by you. I am not insensible, would I have indulged Separation, I might have been magnified as your Martyr; but I abhor Faction, and pursue Truth and Duty.

Nonconformists of old did account it their glory, that they did not separate, nor any way encourage or countenance, but every way disown and oppose the Separatists.

The Judicious Ball affirms, Answer to Can. p. 20. That as Hannibal observed

there was not one in the Enemy's Camp called Gilco: so there was not so much as one of the godly Ministers which suffered in England about the Discipline, that might be deservedly called Brownist; not a Nonconformist could be found a Separatist.

I wish we could at this day say the same thing, with the same truth and confidence.

But alas! How many whose Preaching and Writings have been strong and fervent against Separation, do at this day make the Independents insult. Your Presbyters leave the publike Assemblies, have gathered Churches, in which they minister the whole solemn Worship of God; and not contented with Domestick Liberty, have occasioned the

Laws,

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Laws, and *execution* thereof, to confound them, with the *severest Separatists*, and most vile Sects, that ever troubled the *Churches Order*, or the *Nations Peace*? *Pudeat hæc dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli.* I did in an Epistle published many years since, sollicite the *seri-*
ous Nonconformists, in this day of temptation, to *kick*

Vid. Appendix
to Reformation,
not Separation.

off that Bastard-brood of Separatists which *hang on them*, and are by their Enemies *laid at their door*, as their *genuine off-spring*. But I have not herein prevailed; but, to the anguish of my Soul, seen Schism so acceptable to good men, that scarce any called *Nonconformist* dare once reprove it. In sense whereof, and in conscience of duty, I could not keep silence, but by Pulpit and Press stand up to testify against this common growing evil, eating out *Love*, the *Heart* of Piety, the *Power* of Truth, and *Unity* of the Church. If you have any Charity left, receive this Tract as a token of Love; *read it* with patience; *revolve* in your Minds the matters therein argued; *reason* against it with *sobriety* and *solid arguments*; I promise you my Review and Second thoughts. But if you rashly reject it, take

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heed you *reject not the truth against your selves*. If thou rail, rage, and reproach it, or the Author; and prescribe the same Antidote to *Care for Church-communion*, as to the *Cure of Church-divisions*; expect no other Answer than *The Lord rebuke thee*: but know, I shall in silence rejoyce in thy Reproaches, as stripes on Christ's Body, and part of his Cross; yet I will take liberty to obviate some few things at which you may be apt to stumble.

First, I expect the *Committee of Discretion* (at whose Barr I have (on this very cause) stood more than twenty years without conviction) to revive against Me, and this Work, their old Charge; *However the thing is good, the Doctrine is truth, the discovery thereof be duty; yet it is done unseasonably, and out of time*. I have been often arraigned for *missing the season*; yet no man hath set me a *Dial* by which to determine the time of my Ministerial actions: In the year 1655, my *Saints Zeal against sinful Altars*, was out of season: In 1661, my *Reformation not Separation*, was out of season. It is now 1670, and yet the *season* of this duty is not seen. When
will

to the Reader.

will this *season* be, wherein I may appear against Schism? When I am in the Grave (towards which I hasten) where there is no mention of God, nor pleading the cause of his Church? If I know any thing of the Mind of the *God of Time*, and may compare Watches with the faithful Watchmen of God's House, the *season of Ministerial reproof*, is the *season of sin's prevalency*: When the Believers are in danger to be *beguiled from the simplicity of the Gospel*, was *Paul's season* to cry out, *Take heed of Angels of light, and false Apostles*. When *Schisms in the Church* (not so dangerous and deadly as Schisms from the Church) *distracted Corinth*, was the Apostle's time to cry out, *Ye are carnal, ye are not spiritual*. When *Peter turned Separatist*, and drew *Barnabas* into the Schism, was *Paul's season* to *withstand him to the face*, because he was to be *blamed*. What shall I say of the *Prophets*, who timed their *Prophecies* by the *prevalency* of Israel's defection: and our *Saviour*, who chose the *season* to explain the Law, when the *Scribes and Pharisees* had *made the word of God of none effect by their Traditions*. *Austin's season*

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to preach against *Drunkennes*, was when, and as long as the men of *Hippo* lived *Drunkards*. And to appear against *Separation*, when, and as long as the *Donatist's Schism* prevailed in the Christian World. *Luther's* season to express his zeal against the *German Anabaptists*, and *Libertines*, was when they exposed his Reformation to reproach. *Ball*, *Hildersham*, *Hind*, *Nicols*, and other Nonconformist's season, to speak and write against *Separation*, was when the Brownists *Non-communion* became the reproach of their *Non-conformity*. If these may not guide me, lend me your *Watches*; if they go not false, I will set mine by them.

In answer to this charge of missing the season of Truth and Duty, I have many years since appealed to Presbyters, Whether men *wisely serving God's Providence*, and *studious to do God and his Church proper and apt service*, must not judg the time of *witnessing corruptions* circa *cul-tum publicum*, will not warrant *non-communion and separation from a true Church*, to be; then, when, that is acted on this ground and reason? Till that be argued and

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and over-rul'd; I will plead no more to this Inditement; and that I expect not to be, till Christ do come to Judgment.

Secondly: But you will be ready to complain, That I am *too rigid, too severe and bitter against the Independent Congregationalists, who undoubtedly are very good men.* To this I say:

- I. The Goodness of the men be to *themselves*: But remember, The *Goodness of the men* is the common bait which hideth the Hook of *Imposture and Seduction*, by which the simple are beguiled. *Angels of Light, Men like the Apostles of Christ, Pious Pelagius, Devout and Holy Novatius,* have been the *perverters of Truth, and subverters of the Churches Peace and Order*. And be the men never so good, the severe reproof of their *vile Opinions, and sinful Practices*, must not be superseded by that *Goodness* which is in them.

2: Be the men as Good as they will, if by their fruits we may know them, we must be free to affirm, they have been

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no good Plants in the Lord's Garden. To pass by the Narrative of their Practices beyond the Seas, collected by the *Anti-apologist*, and improved by

Disswas. from Mr. Robert Baylie, beyond Error.

the possibility of denial or contradiction. Should we but declare their *Paganizing all England*, the *Confusions* in Church, and *Commutations* in Commonwealth which our Eyes have seen acted by, and this present Age must attest to have been the unhappy horrid *Generation-work of these good men*; you must needs say, *The severest rebuke of them*, must needs be *too gentle*. But I will forbear to recite the Acts which all of this Age must needs remember: yet when I consider the *sinfulness* of Schism, the *specialty* of their *Schism*, exceeding that of the *rigid Brownists*; unchurching not only England, but all the *Reformed Churches*, at one blow; meritoriously, by their *Apostacy*; and legally, by the *Law* of their *rejection*: And remember their *precipitancy*, if I must not say *perfidie*, in falling into it when the *pretended occasions of stumbling* were out of their way, and they were *solemnly engaged against Schism*,
and

to the Reader.

and this *very Schism*: I cannot but see much reason to maintain a *constant* and *severe* zeal against them; and the rather, for that (we have observed it, we know the verity of it) the *sobriety*, *moderation*, and *indulgent* silence, of their soft and over-mild Brethren, hath been the *nourishment*, *guard*, and *advantage* of their Schism: They, as (their Progenitors) the *Donatists*, did at first study nothing more, than by the cry of *Moderation*, *Moderation* towards Brethren and Good men, to charm the Zeal and Duty of those who ought to have discovered this *Panther's Face*, before they had broken in, and made havock of the Church of God; as at this day they do, necessitating more loud cries, and severe reproofs against them, than ever; for that they have prevailed so far, as to seduce *Multitudes*, and confound endeavours for *Reformation*, with their groundless *Separation*; and, with the *Donatists*, want nothing but opportunity to make their *Schism* domineer through the World, beyond the power of Magistratical cohibition.

The simple Godly have a long time
b 4 been

The Epistle

been deluded with a pretence, *That there is no great difference between them and their angry Brethren; it is but a matter of Discipline; there is nothing in their Practice fundamentally erroneous, or inconsistent with salvation.* And scarce any man is found so faithful, as to detect the falsehood of this Plea: Let me tell you, wherein the Controversie only concerneth *matters of Discipline*: I have often said it, and now say it aloud; Though I know the *Discipline* they pretend to, to be *confused, disorderly, and mischievous to the Church*; neither found in Scripture, nor right Reason or Polity; yet let them own the *being and truth* of the Church, the *salvability of Ministration* in it; and in *union* with the Church, in any particular, orderly distributed Assembly, make their *Discipline practicable* if they can; they shall not be by me disturbed, till they have experienced the evil thereof in its Effects. But be ye not deceived; there is more cause of controversie, than matters of Discipline only. I have often under my hand asserted, what with the leave of my more moderate Brethren I will persist in, and undertake to demonstrate, to the

to the Reader.

conviction of them who deny it, at least to the undeceiving of the *weak*, who are seduced by them: That if

1. *Groundless or causeless Separation from true Churches;*

2. *Self-constitution of new Churches;*

3. *Self-consecration of a new Ministry;*

be, as none can deny they be, *fundamental Errors*, and *Practices inconsistent with a state of salvation*; then the *Way or Practice* of the *Independent-Congregationalists*, among us, is *fundamentally erroneous*, and *inconsistent with salvation*: for, that they have *groundlessly separated from true Churches*, constituted *new Churches*, and consecrated a *new Ministry*; insomuch that they who were lawfully ordained, have renounced their Ordination, and received their Ministry in their new Way; let any who have seen their course, and considered their Writings, deny if they can.

Although I have charity to believe, many a *sincere heart* towards God; may
simply

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simply communicate with God's Ordinances among them; and not be sensible of their Schism, nor design so great an evil, no way obvious to the weak; yet their Way being in it self so evil, requireth all that will be found faithful (as Jerome and Austin against the Donatists), to animate each other to discover so great an evil, and withstand so grievous Schism, growing to so great an height, as to confound, yea nullifie the Church of God among us.

I have but one thing more to remove out of thy way, and I will dismiss thee to the Work which is before thee. Some say to me :

How come I to be so singular in this case of Church-communication; as if so many godly learned Ministers could not know the Mind of God concerning his Church, as well as I? And in this Discourse, many conceive me to have strangely turned about; and to be much contrary to what I preached and wrote some years ago. In answer to this:

I. I am not alone, nor singular in these
No-

to the Reader.

Notions of *Church-communion*; I may be alone in the so *publike* pleading, and *earnest pressing* of them; but there are among us many Grave, Pious, and Judicious Divines, who *believe, speak, and practise* the same things. I offer you no *new Doctrine*; but that *Divinity*, as to this point, which hath been taught by all the Guides of the Church both *ancient and modern*, in all Ages of the Church; and that which our *Brethren themselves* (however they now practise) have preached in *Press and Pulpit*. I have often provoked many of them to *read with deliberation*, and under their hands *subscribe an anti-thesis* to what in this case I have asserted; they never have done it; they know they cannot do it: The Lord lead them out of temptation, that truth may appear and prevail.

2. Were I alone (as I am not; others plead the same Cause in the same way), yet Truth is not to be weighed by the numbers of its Assertors, but by its *native strength*. Truth is Truth in the mouth of one. One *Paphnutius* did assert Truth to, and against the whole Council of Nice.

If

The Epistle

If I be a single Assertor of any Truth, yet I would not hold any *single Opinion*; I desire any to help me to see the *proprium dogma* that I do defend.

3. If men conceive me to be altered and turned from what I was, and to contradict any thing I formerly wrote or preached; I say, if I were in error, none will deny it to be my duty to recede, to return from it: yet, I conceive, men conceive amiss concerning me, and suppose me changed from what I was, because they are so themselves; row on your course, till God bring you back, and you will find me where you left me. I wish any who have heard me any time almost Thirty years last past, or read those Writings which bear my Name in the World, would be at the pains to compare Notes, and note unto me the contradiction of my Notions. I did in the year 1645, preach on this very Text many Sermons at Goostree in Cheshire; and in the year 1647, at Newcastle in Staffordshire; many then took Notes in Short-hand: In the year 1652, I preached at James Garlickhithe, on Heb. 10. 25. Not forsaking the assembling your
selves

to the Reader.

selves together, as the manner of some is: Many then took Notes of that Discourse. I have many times, in many places, preached the same things I have now preached, and do now publish; never any other Doctrine: My *Saints* zeal against *Sinful Altars*, speaks the same language; and whatsoever I wrote against the *corruptions of the Church*, hath secured the *Communion of the Church*, and protested, *Separation* cannot be thereby warranted. I wish, for the sake of the common concerns of *Reformation*, many of our Brethrens present practice could be found as consonant to their former *Preaching and Writing*, as I am sure mine is.

Courteous Reader, I have held thee too long in the Threshold, but hope I have taken some stumbling-stones out of thy way. Now proceed; read with Care, weigh with Religious Reason: The Lord give thee Understanding, is the Prayer of

From my Study,
Sept. 26. 1670.

*Thine in the Service of
Christ and his Church,*

ZEC. CROFTON.

A brief ANALYSIS of the ensuing Tract.

Text. Cant. i. 7. { Explained.
Paraphrased.

Posit. Such as love Christ, must be careful to keep communion with the Church of Christ.

The Position explained, in which is considered,

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| { | 1. The Church is not | { | Civil Society. |
| | | | Place of Assembly:
Court of Officers. |
| { | 2. Communion in a common | { | But,
The Subjects of Christ's Mediatorship. |
| | | | Participation of Priviledges,
Performance of Duties. |
| { | 3. Care thereof in a | { | 1. Sight of Duty. |
| | | | 2. Sense of want. |
| { | 4. Reasons of this Care, to | { | 3. Souls desire. |
| | | | 4. Supplication to Christ the Lord. |
| { | 5. Sedulous endeavour. | { | 1. Shew relation to the Lord. |
| | | | 2. Serve God in solemn public Worship. |
| { | 3. Secure an Interest in the Covenant of Grace. | { | 3. Secure an Interest in the Covenant of Grace. |
| | | | 4. Scape the dangers of Non-communion. |

The

The Position applied by a double Exhortation.

1. *Exhort.* To know which is the true Church, with which we must keep Communion; and that is guided by,

Seven false Marks
of a Church:

1. Multitude.
2. Christians.
3. Real Saints.
4. True Worship.
5. True Ministers.
6. Edification.
7. Gift of Prophecy.

2. *Exhort.* To } obtain } communion with
 } retain } the Church.

Which is enforced with a Motive from the usefulness of Schism; and is shewed,

Schism is an } Act of the Flesh.
 } Argument of Non-communion with the Church.
 } Assault on Charity.
 } Abasement of Christ our Lord,
 } Affliction to the Church.
 } Advantage to Heresie.

Schism is,

1. Explained, as to its Name and Nature; and vindicated from Doctor Owen's restrictions of it.
2. Extended beyond the narrow imputations of some, who have groundlessly and unjustly charged it on such who justify,

1. Separation from Rome
2. Speaking against the Debates and Determinations of the Church
3. Sober blaming growing corruptions in the Church
4. Striving against some actions of Governours in the Church
5. Celebration of Worship in unconsecrated places
6. Serving God with Domestick freedom

is not Schism.

3. Expressly charged to be a groundless separation from

from a true Church; and such is the separation of all who leave the communion of the Church on these grounds, proved insufficient and unwarrantable.

1. Ignorance of first Institution.
2. The Nationality and Parochiality of Churches.
3. Quondam defection from the ways of God.
4. Defects and disorders in the call and carriage of some Ministers.
5. Rudē and disorderly Ministrations of VVorship; in which is considered the Liturgy.
6. Some Ceremonies superadded to God's Worship.
7. Mixt Assemblies.
8. Neglect of Discipline.
9. Relapse after solemn Vow and Covenant for Reformation.
10. Removal of some Ministers from the publick exercise of their Ministry.

The Conclusion of the whole, in a brief Exhortation to those who are out of the communion of the Church, to get into it with care and speed.



THE
SAINTS CARE
FOR
CHURCH COMMUNION.

The Text, *Canticles* or Song of Solomon, Chap. i. Ver. 7.

Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest; Where thou makest thy Flocks to rest at Noon: Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions?

C A P. I.

Explaining the Text.



IT is a saying not more ancient, and common, then true and certain; *Ex Ecclesia nulla salus*: For that Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Church, the Body to which each Member holding, the head must be united,

B

The Saints care

ted, in it to grow up; till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the mea-

Ecclesia Christi, ex Christo capite pendens tota est simul coagmentata & constabilita. Zanch. in Loc.

sure of the fulness of the stature of Christ Jesus; witnesseth the Apostle Paul in Ephes. 4. 13, 16. Yet alas! how many live amongst us, professing dearest affection, nearest union to the Head; who make light of union and communion with the Body, rending the Church and rending themselves from the Church; following any Assemblies who bear but the name of Christs companions? contrary to the care of the Daughters of Jerusalem expressed in this Text. Tell me (O thou whom my Soul loveth) where thou feedest, where thou makest thy Flock to rest at noon? for why should I be as one which turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

Old Father Latimer in one of his Letters to Bishop Ridley noteth; much talk is of the Church, but little care, or consideration of the

For Acts and Monu: in his. flo. ejus.

nature of the Church; I would the Church, and communion with it, were better understood, and more and more consider'd: The complaint, and desire of this good man hath ever since continued, and yet been little regarded; they are but few, who follow Christ with the entreaties in the Text, for direction into

union

for Church-Communion. 3

union, and communion with his Church.

The judicious *Ames* passeth from the explanation of Christs *Redemption* and *Mediatorship*, to discourse of the *Church*, conform to the Method of a man, so acceptable to many among us; I having exhibi-

ted to you * Jesus Christ the righteous, your *Advocate* with the Father; and the propitiation for your sin, Think it convenient to quicken and ingage your addressees to him for direction (in these disordered dayes) unto union, and

* *Ecclesia naturam
nec; explicare, nec;
intelligere potuimus,
nisi prius explicari,
& percipi, quæ
pertinent ad explica-
tionem Christi. Ames.
Medul. Cap. 31. Sec.
3. from John 2.
1, 2.*

communion with his Church. Whosoever thirst's to enjoy his presence; the refreshments of his Spirit, take up the words of the Text, and pray, Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon? for why should I be as one which turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

This Song of *Solomons*, although it hath been generally (as well in the Church of the Jews as Christians) acknowledged *Canonical*, and of *Divine Authority*: yea, esteemed one of the most excellent Portions of *Holy Writ*: Yet in all ages, it hath been

rarely read, or handled in the Church; and that by reason of the *Allegorical, Enigmatical stile* in which it is

Beza in Li-
bro Cant.

written; a reason I confess, to awe into a serious consideration, but not to inhibit the use of what is here written for the good of the Church.

The Divine Authority of this Book, I will take as granted: Our Church and Age, not being perplexed with questions concerning the Authority of the Books of Holy Writ.

The Order of this Book, whether it were written before, after, or between the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, the works of Solomon (the wisest of meer men) the undoubted penman of this Book, I think not worth the while to dispute.

The Title must be yielded to be most apt.

* *Excellentissimum Canticum omnium Canticorum a Solomone compositorum.* Vatab. Elari. It is a * *Canticle of Canticles*; A Song of Songs which was *Solomons*: In respect of the thousand and

five Songs by himself written, mentioned in I. King. 4. 22. all which this much excelled. Or in respect of the ten Scriptural

* *Inter omnia Cantica unquam antehac Scripta, isto in Scriptura Sacra Scripta, quanto magis in profano, eminentissimum.* Mercer. in Loc. * Songs mentioned by the Chaldee Paraphrase; and all others which this excelled, for that this was written by the Subject of such Exquisite Wisdom.

This Song in the form of it, is an *Epithalamium*, or Love-Song: Composed more *Lammatis*, after the manner of a Comedy.

dy, where *Sponsus*; *Sponsi amici*, *Sponsa*, *Sponsa socij*; the *Bridegroom*, his *Friends*, the *Bride*, and her *Companions*, are brought on the Stage, Acting their several Parts: And as all Expositors both Jewish, and Christian agree, under the Allegory of *Bride*, and *Bridegroom*, *Husband*, and *Wife*; (which the Holy Ghost also useth frequently in other parts of holy Writ) the *Mysterious Communion* between Christ and his Church, is most exactly described, and Emphatically expressed.

Hence we may note,

Although in ordinary course of Disputation, *Theologia Parabolica* is not *Argumentativa*: Yet *Scripture Allegories* are more then meer *Illustrations*: by vertue of that Divine Authority by which they were chosen, and made use of, they carry a *swasion* to the Will, and *Conviction* to the Judgement; as well as *Illumination* to the mind. Never was our Saviours Preaching more cogent, and with more authority, then when he Preached in Parables. I well know an Allegory is *Versatilis materia quæ huc & illuc trahi, imo & duci possit*. A fluid matter which by a quick fancy, may be easily drawn, and applyed to things which were never intended: Yet to such who keep close to, and know how to use *Scripture-Allegories* (which never run on all four, but design, and set out

The Saints care

some one particular thing) they have a most piercing perspicuity, to the conviction of a most stubborn mind. I cannot approve the Allegorizing of all Scriptures, Prophecies, precepts and histories, the usual

* Blow at the root of some discoveries of Satans Stratagems.

course of the Jewish *Cabals*, *Popish*, (and some other) *Posill's*, some former

and late *Expositions* and the natural Genius of the *Familists*, *Quakers* (their brood) and some *Socinians* to the enervating Holy Writ, and making the words of God of none effect.

Nor yet can I justifie those who wholly neglect, slight, cast off some portions of Scripture, making it loose it's Authority, and End, because exhibited by an Allegory.

This Chapter beginning the Comedy, brings on the Stage the *Bride*, and *Bridegroom*, by a Pathetique Colloquie, and Reciprocal conference, acting their part, and entertaining each other.

1. *The Church the Spouse* begins, with earnest expressions, of *enflamed affections* to Christ her Lord: and Loves *candid confessions* of her deformity, and defections; *Expostulations* with her children in reference to their contempt of her because there of; and so imploreth the *guidance* and *direction* of her Beloved, unto the ready, and regular injoyment of him from v. 1. to v. 8.

The

2. The Lord Christ the Husband maketh answer to her Prayer, and giveth Direction which way to steer her course, and how to know the Assemblies in which he is to be enjoyed; and declareth his esteem of, and affections to his Spouse, in the following verses.

The Text sheweth the *Saints care of communion with Christs Church*, on the sense of danger, (in an aberration from it) expressed in an earnest Prayer: for *direction*, to the certain knowledge of: and it naturally divideth it self into two parts.

First, A Prayer for guidance in a doubtful disordered state, *Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon.*

Secondly, A pressing Argument to perswade the acceptance of, and a speedy answer to her Prayer: *For why should I be as one, that turneth aside by the flocks of thy Companions.*

I intend not to Discourse on the words at large; nor to enlarge the singular good Observations, which might be inferred from them: Therefore premitting the Subdivisions of the Text; and these two general Parts thereof; I shall briefly Explain the words; and note the Proposition, which shall be the Subject of our ensuing discourse.

Note therefore,

Defection, Disorder, Distraction, and Distress had seized on the Church:
ver. 5.6. She complains of *Blackness, and Contempt, Bruises and Oppression*; by reason whereof the Daughters of *Jerusalem* did scorn, neglect, and cast her off. Not to say any thing of the state of the Church, to which the Jewish Rabbies do refer this complaint: The reverend

Targum Jeroso.

Cotton on Cantic. in
Text.

Cotton of New England, (who maketh this Book, a *Description of the state of the Church*, in every age of Jews or Christian) referreth this sad complaint, unto the dreadful *Schism and Defection* of the ten Tribes under *Jeroboam*; whose Idol-calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, made the *God-fearing Israelites* in a doubtful case, to enquire after the *true Church*, and address themselves to the Lord for direction, in so dangerous a state: who thus pray: *O thou whom my soul loveth*: with a *Pathetical Periphrasis*, or circumlocution, rather than any Positive compellation; as being more *Emphatical*, and of more force to induce attention: She

Hæc Periphrasis, majorem vim habet, quam si nomen proprium posuisset: vel si simpliciter dilecte, vel amice mi, merc.

had before professed, *the Virgins love him*; and *the upright love him*; nor would She have it thought, that she also had not tasted his

Love's

Love's better then Wine, and savoured his holy name, as an Oyntment poured out, to the enflaming her desire, to be kissed with the kisses of his mouth, and to be drawn by him that she may run after him: Therefore she loves him with this profession of affection, O thou whom my soul loveth?

Tell me: Indica mihi; as the Vulgar Latine: Shew me: nuntia mihi, as the Hebrew, and Septuagint; declare unto me; by Word or Act, make me to know, give me some certain Declaration, some infallible Demonstration; which in a cloudy state, may dissolve my Doubts; and direct my mind with readiness and resolution, to follow thee.

Where thou feedest, where thou makest lie down at noon.

Where, not how, as the Syriack Interpreters, and such as follow them would have it; though the signification of the word; the scope of the Supplication and the Argument to enforce the Prayer, and the answer to it, conclude where, with respect to place, or society; not how? respecting the Mode and Manner which ever was, and is by Ordinances and the Spirit of Grace.

Ubi rectius
quam Quodmo-
do. Merc.

[Thou feedest, thou makest to rest at noon; not Passively, but Actively, not himself, but others; and therefore thy flock is well inserted in our Translation: For as Shepherds feed, and

and in the noon-day Sun, make their sheep to lie, and take rest in shadowie

1 Pet. 2. places : So Christ the *Shepherd*
25. and *Bishop of our Souls*, doth by

his Pastoral care, cause his *Church and Flock*, to enjoy the Ordinances, and Influences of his Grace in *quiet, and safe places*; in the dayes of *Distraction and Disorder*. Christ hath his Church (in which all his sheep enjoying communion, may be refreshed, in an hour of affliction and temptation) ever *existent*, though not ever *extant*; in *being*, though not in *beauty*, it is, when not *perspicuous*: But by deformity, disorder, and distraction obscured: So that a soul seeking communion with Christ, in communion with his Church, may be at a loss, and in doubt, and constrained to *run to Christ by Prayer*; with a *tell me where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to lie down at noon*. Shew me thy Church, or that Society in communion with which, by thy Pastoral care, thou causest thy flock to couch, and rest at noon: and to *press acceptance* thereof with a sense of danger and distraction.

For why should I be as one which turneth aside by the flocks of thy companion. Companions: not *Real*, and *Sincere*, but *Semblable*, in shew and pretence: Christ hath his *Companions*: such as *seem like him* as the

*Sunt qui interpretentur, sodales reges vel praesides gentium, nam quoddam est ab his praesse, Clavi.

* *Kings and Princes of the Earth and Na-*

tions of the World: or *profess Relation to him* as of old did the children of *Eſau* and *Iſhmael* (as noteth the Jews Targum, and Chaldee Paraphraſe) the *Sons of Corah*, and *Rebels of Jeroboam*; and in our dayes the *Aſſemblies of Heretiques, Schiſmaticques* and *Seducers*; who under a glorious profeſſion of enjoying Chriſt, act enmity againſt him, and draw ſouls from him to their ruine. Theſe companions have flocks; *many in number*; and (though the Subjects and Authors of confuſion) communicating in ſome ſeeming order; *The Church of Chriſt is but one, the Body, whereof he is the Head, exiſting in ſeveral Members,* whereas theſe Trayterous companions have as many flocks, as they have ſects, ſaith Beza: and each flock pretends to be Chriſts Body; and him to be their Head.

Sermons on
Canti.

For why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide, as one covering her ſelf, from the Hebrew; veluti operiens. As one beginning to wander as the Vulgar and Sy-

riack, as a covered Harlot *mucamium*, *compaſſed with Lovers*; or covered

Vagari incipiam, ſed vim vocis non reddi, projecta inter greges non tuos, Mercer.

for ſtrangers acceſs; as the *Septuagint* (which ſome aſſent to follow) as one *proſtituted*, amidſt the flocks of thy companions; the *Fabick* renders it. [As one covered by reaſon of grief and ſhame.] Some

Expoſitors

The Saints Latt

Expositors understand it: and make the Argument thus. *Why should I be as one covering*

Gur ero tanquam ob-
tegens labrum præ pu-
dore, & luctu, inter
gentes quæ suos habent
rectores, moderatores,
& reges.

the upper lip: filled with
grief and shame, among
thy companions; the Nations
of the Earth; who have
their *Governours*, guiding
and defending them, under

whom they live in *peace* and *order*; whilst I
as a *forsaken Widow* without guide, or Rule,
run into disorder, and live in tumults.

Sensus mysticus est
proclivis, metuere Ec-
clesiam ne si non si-
bi a Christo locus in-
diceretur, ubi eum in-
veniat ad alios cœtus
oberret eorum, qui se
socios Christi sub no-
mine Ecclesiæ vendi-
tant, nec posse se peri-
culum effugere tra-
ctum falsorum & cul-
pum aliorum, &c.

Why should I be as one
that is covered, *Attired*
like an Harlot, and wander
hither and thither, among
the Flocks. A prey to the
lust of every seducing spi-
rit, and false Impostor: and
this best pleaseth the best
Expositors. The Mystical
sence is plain saith *Mercer*:
the Church feared, if she

should not be shewed the place, where she
might find and enjoy Christ, she should wan-
der into the Assemblies of those, who by
name only, boasted themselves to be the
Church of Christ; she could not escape the
danger of false brethren, and false wayes of
Worship.

The words present to our thoughts a *serious*
Christian, under a *double state of Soul*, by rea-
son

for Church-Communion. 13

son of the *Distractions* of the Church which cloude it; thus breathing the desires of its heart into the bosome of a Dear Redeemer.

‘O blessed Jesus! with love of thee my heart
‘is *enflamed*; without the enjoyment of thee
‘I cannot *live*; I long after the influences of
‘thy *Grace* and *Favour*: Thou hast thy Church
‘in which, by thy Spirit in the Ministration
‘of Ordinances, thou dost *feed* thy People,
‘and *refresh* their Soul, under the most
‘scorching influences of persecution, temp-
‘tation, or affliction: *Distraction* and *Disor-*
‘*der* hath prevailed, and so darkned thy
‘Church, that though it is my greatest
‘care to keep in communion with them,
‘(the object of thy most compassionate
‘care:) I am in doubt where to find it: O
‘(that I may not mistake) do thou *shew me*,
‘declare to me; make me with certainty to
‘know, *where is thy Church*; which is the
‘Society, and Assembly refreshed by thy
‘Grace and Spirit: For why should thy *com-*
‘*panions* the *Nations*, and *People* of the world,
‘live in peace, and order, under their guides,
‘and Governours; and only *I* the immediate
‘Subject and Spouse of the God of Order, *co-*
‘*ver my lip* through grief and shame of
‘my disordered State, and carriage: Why
‘should I be endangered, as a wandering *co-*
ver

'cured Harlot, to fall in among those false As-
 'semblies, who pretend to be *thy companions*;
 'but indeed seduce souls from thee to false
 'ways and Worship: This is (O Lord) my dan-
 'ger; the knowledge of, and communion with
 'thy true Church my only *Security*; concern-
 'ing which whilst doubts oppress my mind,
 'care doth constrain this supplication for
 'the direction of thee my Guide: Accept it as
 'such, and answer it.

The Words thus opened: do plainly pre-
 sent to our consideration, this Observation
 or point of Doctrine.

Proposition. *Such who truly love Christ,*
must be greatly careful, to live in communion
with the Church of Christ,

In the prosecution of this Doctrine, I shall
 present you by way of *Explication*, with some
 things concerning the Church.

Something concerning communion with
 the Church.

Something concerning the care of this
 Communion, in those which love Christ,
 with the Reasons of such care.

These explained, I will improve the Point
 by *Application*.

C A P. I I.

Explaining the Church and shewing what that is which must be the object of Saints Communion.

THe *Church*, we find, is the Object of that communion, the care of which is the Duty, and Property of such as *love Christ*, we must therefore consider some thing concerning it.

Church is a term of very large, and ample signification; both in prophane, and Sacred Writings: As may be seen in those Theological Discourses and common places, which *ex professo* write concerning the *Church*: I intend not a common-place discourse; and therefore shall only take notice of those Acceptations of the Word; which by common use are come to the understanding of common people, to the creating doubts, in what sence it is to be understood, as the Object of their Duty and Property, and so note,

1. Church signifieth any *civil convention*; or Society and Assembly of men, orderly or Rude; Pious or Prophane, tumultuous or invested with Authority: Thus the *Athenians*, did use the term to signifie the people called into Court to hear the commands of

Vid. Pisat. Apho. Loc.
19. Apho. 1.

their

their *Magistrates*; and when they run disorderly into Tumults, they called themselves a *Church*, forming to themselves a Specimen, or kind of Order and Magistracy: Hence the *Assembly before whom*, the Tumultuous were to be convened, and the Tumult *it self* in the case of *Demetrius*, against

Bezo his large annotation. in Loc.

Paul, is called a *Church* in Acts 19. 39, 41. and so it answereth to the Hebrew

Kahal which the Septuagint doth render *Ecclesia*, Church, in Psal. 22. 23. Deut. 5. 22. and many other places: But Observe,

Church in this sence is not the *Object of that communion which is the Saints care*: They who never knew Christ, and have no affection or relation to him, have been, may be, and must be careful to maintain humane society, and communion with them. Nor can the Saints most affected to Christ whilst men living among men, after the manner of men;

Si prorsus vobis abstinentum sit ab ejusmodi hominum confortio, ex mundo emigrandum est.
Aquin.

avoid communion with the Church thus understood; (as witnesseth the Apostle) unless they go out of this World, 1 Cor. 5. 9, 10. and therefore I

cannot pass this interpretation without a threefold caution.

I *Caut.* Of all Humane Society let none, more study *publick good*, and more carefully on-

for Church-Communion. 87

conserve, and observe *Humane Order*; then *Christians, Saints, and those who profess affection to Christ our Lord*: Least his holy name be blasphemed amongst men of the World, who dread the *God of Order*: which the disorders of Christians too much bespeak a *God of confusion*, unto such who judge the Spirit of *Governours*, by the carriage of the governed.

2. *Caut.* In the affairs of Christ's Church, which are only *Humane*, and *Civil*, relating to men as men; as *Place, Order, Time, manner of convention*; and much in *Polity*: Let *Saints* be careful to keep that *Order and Decorum*, which become regular Churches or Societies of men; and the most Tumultuous affect and cannot (in their very Rebellion) but approve: least the Assemblies of men, surpass, and put to shame the Assemblies of Christians.

3. *Caut.* Let none be taken with the name of Church, as a sufficient warrant for communion: How the Church at Athens which in tumult afflicted Paul, would be justified, the Town Clerk of Ephesus doubted: But I nothing doubt to say that Religious Churches gathered out of Churches; notwithstanding, the cry *this whole gnedah, cetus, Assembly, or Church is holy*, may perish in the gainsaying of *Gorah*: They that observe no Order amongst men; and they who regard not to

convene according to the Rule of Christ; may be called *Churches*; but these are not the Churches of Christ, but rather Congregations to be avoided, and fled from by all that seek the true enjoyment of God in the Congregations of his people.

2. This term *Church* amongst approved greek Authors, was used to signify not only the *Assembly it self*; but also the *place in which the Assembly did meet, and come together*: The same after was applied to *Christian Assemblies*; and by a Metonymic of the continent for the thing contained; both in Scripture, as 1 Cor. 11, 22. by ancient & modern Writers; and by common acceptation among

Austin: quæst. 17. Sup.
Levit.

Basil Moral. reg. 30.

our selves, it is used to signify the places of Assembly; peculiarly those places set apart, and purposely designed for the Administration of Word, Prayer, and Sacraments in and to the Christian assemblies. These are by some Learned and Judicious Divines, affirmed not only to have been; but also to have been

Fulleri Misc. Lib. 2.
Cap. 5.

Mede Churches for
Christian worship.

called by the name of Church in, and ever since the Apostles dayes, in all ages, and places of the Christian World. On this acceptation of the Word it is necessary that we make these Observations.

for Church-Communion. 19

1. *Obs.* To call our places of Assembly, in which Gods solemn Worship is celebrated by his people, by the name of *Church*, is neither *new* nor *without reason*: much less *Irreligious*, *Superstitious* and *Prophane*, and as such to be declined, and avoided, as to both name, and thing, as some foolishly fancy; and too many amongst us fondly practice. Such who affect to call our places of Assembly, *Steeple-houses*, and *Meeting-houses*; and weakly object against the calling them *Churches*; the Church of Christ is not made of *Stone* and *Timber*; on a serious consideration of the proper liberty of speech, used by the Spirit of God in Scripture, and by the Masters of Reason in all ages; will find themselves more Superstitiously curious, then true Subjects of Reason. But yet,

2. *Obs.* These places or *Churches*, are not, the *Church*, intended in the Doctrine, to be the object of *communion* charged on those who *love Christ*. These being made of Insensible Materials, (Wood and Stone,) cannot be communicated with by living souls: The Assemblies of Christians, may in these *Churches* communicate each with other, in the administration of holy things; but *with them* they hold no communion: Places, they are of *conveniency* for the Use and Order of the Assemblies, as were the Synagogues

to the Jews: but not of *sanctity* or Holiness, necessitating access unto them; not *Essential parts of Worship to God, and communion to Saints* as was the *Tabernacle*, and after that, the *Temple at Jerusalem* to the Jews: Should any demand on a Religious account; must we *Worship God* and *accompany* with his people, in our *Parish Churches*, or the *Meeting-houses*, private places of Assembly, in fields, woods, or Caves? I shall answer as our Saviour in the like case to the Woman of *Samaria*; neither in this *Mountain*, nor in *Samaria*, John 4. 21. So in point of necessity, duty, and holiness, neither in *Parish Churches*, nor other places; but in every place, in any place; for the Lord may be called on every where, and in any place he that calleth on him, in the name of Christ shall be accepted; So that *the matter and form of Worship, and Subjects of Communion*, be truly *Christian*, rightly constituted, whether the Assembly be in this, or that place, is to me no dispute, in reference to the Duty under consideration. I do not doubt *holiness of places* to be vanished with other shadows, Levitical Rites, and Types, upon the appearance of the Substance and Antitype.

Yet I think it worth regard, that the Parish Churches (being places of conveniency, for the more certain, and orderly convention of the Assemblies of Christians, in the participation of Divine Ordinances, are not hastily to be declined and run from; but devoutly resorted to as the *houses of God*. Such as wilfully withdraw from Parish Churches, fixed places, while the Assemblies of Christians, do there in peace, with public Profession and order celebrate the *Substantial worship of God*; and *communion of the Church*; and are not thence driven by the violence of persecution, although in private places, Fields, and Dens they serve the same God, with the same Worship; yet they expose themselves to a very great suspicion of schism: For in such case men will be apt to conjecture, the *Assembly convened*, not the *place of assembling*, is avoided, neglected, refused, and disowned.

David Lesley his Paraphrase paragonized, confuteth separation from Parish Churches as a grievous sin.

To remove Parochial bounds would open a gap to thousands of people to live like sheep without a Shepherd, and instead of joyning with pure Churches, to joyn with no Churches; and in a little time (as we conceive) it would bring in all manner of Atheism and profaneness. *London.*

Minist. jus div. Ministerij. Angl. par. 2. p. 11. 3.

3. The *Church* is sometimes used to signifie the *Governours of the Church*; who administer the Discipline, and censure of the Church: These are the *Church Ministerial*; the Court of the Church, receiving complaints, taking cognizance of, and giving judgment in the concerns of the Church, *Matth. 18. 17. Tell the Church*, the Forum or Court of the Church: This is answerable to the *Synedrion* among the Jews, which the Septuagint frequently render *Ecclesia* or Church: this is the *concio magnatum*, assembly of Rulers, distinct from the people, or body of the Assembly worshipping God, and under their Ministration, enjoying in Divine Ordinances communion each with other. Concerning the Church thus understood, let it be noted,

Hudsons Vindication of Church Essence and unity. p. 3. Calvi in loc.

1. The Ministers and Officers of the Church, duly convened,

Ecclesiaz nomine, videtur Christus significasse, Collegium Presbyterorum, qui Ecclesiaz Christianae erant praesenturi. Cameron in Loc.

and entrusted to exercise the Power and Authority, given to his Church in common; acting in the name of the Church; and so representing it to the view of the World, are not unfitly denominated a Church, and hence

hence come Churches to be called *National*, or *Provincial*, by being united under one combination, or convention of Officers: When any Nation doth generally profess Faith in Christ, and communicate in the Ordinances of Grace, under the same Colledge of Governours, or Politick Body; they in, and by their Governours exist a *National Church*; and exhibit a *National confession*, or *Doctrine of Faith*; and Profession of relation and subjection to Christ Jesus.

Thus *England*, *Scotland*, *Anspurge*, *Helvetia*, and other Nations and Cities exist Churches, and exhibited their several confessions of faith, as the Doctrine believed, and taught in these several Churches, Collected in the Harmony of confessions of the reformed Churches. This note may serve to keep any from stumbling at communion with a particular Church, because accounted National.

2. The *Politique* or *Ministerial Church*: the Assembly of Officers Ruling the affairs of the Church, is distinct from the Church, or

Asserimus Ecclesiam esse quandam nationalem unius gentis aut regni, quæ constat ex diversis Ecclesiis uno regimine Ecclesiæ conjunctis & societate Ecclesiasticæ devinctis
Apollon. Confid. Cap. 3.
Asser. 2.

Corpus confessionum fidei, quæ in diversis Regnis vel nationibus in nomine Ecclesiarum fuerunt editæ.

Assembly of Christians subjected to the Worship of God; enjoying communion each with other under their Rule and Order, this the Scriptures do plainly note; when it tells us of the reception of *Paul and Barnabas*, by the *Church, Apostles, and Elders*, Acts 15. 4. And the Ambassadors from the *Church, Apostles, and Elders*, v. 22, and of *Elders ordained in every Church*, Acts 14. 23. This is acknowledged by all Divines: especially those who considering the *Antichrist*, understand the Formality of his existency, to be a *Ministerial acting against Christ Jesus*, as an *Officer* in the name, and by the

Aug. Tractat. de Antich. Tom. 9. p. 15, 16.
Chrysoſt. 1. 2. Theſſ. 1. 3. Hom. 3. Jewell Willet. Morton cum aliis.

Authority of Christ over the Church of Christ which was before his appearance, and must remain after the destruction of this man of

fin. Hence it is that the *Forum* or Court of the Church, or company of Governours, alter, and change both their Persons, and Ministration; and yet, the Church with whom, they who love Christ, must hold communion, *abideth one and the same, unaltered*; Gods true Priests, and Prophets zealous of his honour, and studious of the peoples good, sometimes bare sway; and ruled the affairs of the Church of the Jews, and sometimes it fell into the hands of

Scribes

Scribes and Pharisees who sitting in *Moses* chair, bound on the people heavy burdens, and would cast men out of the Synagogue for following *Christ*, yet under the one, as under the other the Church of God did continue the same, in truth of existency, and relation to God, in communion with the Lord Jesus (under all his invectives against the Governing Church) constantly lived. The Church of Jesus Christ was sometimes ruled by *Apostles*, and *Elders*, or *Presbiters*, which Ministered Worship in purity; and Discipline with care and Power; and it hath sometime fallen under the Rule, and Order of such, who retaining the Power and Authority of the Ministers of Christ, have made defection from the faith of Christ, and Lorded it over Gods Heritage, ruling them with rage and cruelty, to the very informing of the *Antichrist*: Yet in both States, the Church or Assembly of Christians, did remain the same Church of Christ. I cannot but commend to some scrupulous ones among us (who fear the Church and its Governours

Mat. 23. 2, 3, 4.

Audiendos esse scribas & Phariseos, quoniam hæc secta hætenus in regimine Ecclesiæ primatum obtinebat. *Par. in Loc.*

Sicetiam Calvinus in *Harmo. Evangelii.*

Non putant Ecclesiam ipsam non consistere nisi in conciliis, *Calv. Loc. Com. cap. 8. in ps. 218.*

nours to be so confounded, that the defection of the one must needs create destruction to the other, the observation of a New-

Mr. Philips of Waterford in New England concerning the Form of a Church.

England Divine, (to whose words their affection may give authority) If Antichrist must sit in the Temple of God, and the Courts of the Temple, be given unto the Antichristian Gentiles for a certain time to tread under foot. Then there was a true Church-State where he sat, and whilst he sat there, and it was the true measured Temple which he treads under foot: Nor can there be Antichrist unless there be the Temple and Courts of the Church where he is: And if Antichrist ever sat in England; then there was the Temple there, before he sate on it; and whilst he sat in it, as also in other Reformed Churches; the Temple or Church is the Subject, wherein he must sit, the Antichristian Seat is not the Subject, nor constitutes it; but it is an accident removing therefore of Antichristianity doth not destroy or make it cease to be: but it remaineth the same, changed into a better State. There were true Churches in England, and they remain so still, for God hath by no manifest act unchurch'd them. If we may believe St Hierom, and some other Antients; The Forum of the Primitive Church was only Collegium Presbyterorum,

terorum till ad remedium Schismatis a Bishop was advanced over them: And we well know that for many ages, and in many places, a Bishop with his Presbyters hath made the *Court of the Church*; yet no serious man will deny, but *the body of the communicating Church* did abide the same under both. None but *England* paganizing, Church-gathering Congregationalists, did so much as question (which in words they durst never deny, though by works they did it most openly) *the being of the English Churches*, when Presbyters seemed to rule *vacante Episcopo*: nor is there any reason to doubt the *Church is the same*, now Bishops Rule with the Exclusion of some Presbyters: A Colledge of Presbyters without a Bishop,

or a Bishop (to whom by accident, there may be an access of Temporal Dignity, Power, and Authority, as the Priests for some time were Princes of *Israel*) with some Presbyters may constitute the *Court*, or governing Church: Yet the Church under both, or either, abide the same, the Object of the Saints communion. I hope none among us are so Popishly affected, as to place the communion of the Church, in a blind acknowledgement of, and obedience to the *Governours thereof*: Nor would I have any scrupulously fear, that by communion with

In the time of the *Machabees*.

A Bishop was a Minister, and but a Minister, notwithstanding he usurp sole power of Ministering some Ordinances, and have his Lordship,

A meer civil addition annexed to his Bishoprick by Royal Favour and what he doth as a

Minister is valid, and the Ordinance of God. Giles Firmin in his separation examined, p. 22, 23. Proves at large.

is the same; and our communion with the *Governing Church*, is only in our subjection, as Members of the Assembly, or *Church Governed*, unto the Ministration of Divine Ordinances to the Church, as they are *Ministers of Christ*; and this they cease not to be by the *accidental changes in Ministration*, which remain personal to themselves.

4. The Church signifieth the company of men called unto Christ Jesus; and subjected unto the administrations of his Mediatorship: Therefore

Quia Christo unitur
idcirco est Ecclesia Christi.
Anepti. Med. Cap. 31.
Sect. 2.

the *Church Governed*, in the Ordinances of Christ to them Ministered, by *lawful Ministers*, (as that they must be, else their ministration fails; and that may be; to whom there is the accidental access of unusual Dignity, and Power; defective in their Ministration) they communicate in the constitution, *Excrecency*, or *Extravagancies*, of the Church or governing Court: For let it be considered, *mutato foremanet Ecclesia*: The Court changed, still the Church

in opposition to the Church of the Jews, under the terrible, and severe ministrations of the Law : It is called the *Assembly*, and *Church of the first born* ; come to the *Mediatour of the New-Covenant*, Heb. 12. 23. Know we assuredly, the same Jesus whom the Jews crucified at Jerusalem, *God hath made both Lord and Christ*, Acts 2. 36. He hath received a Kingdom from the Father, and this is a *Kingdom of Mediatorship*, which shall be at length given up to the Father, 1 Cor. 15. 24. but during the Reign thereof he *must subdue his enemies* ; and hath *his Peculiar Subjects* which are said to be *given him of God*, and *out of the World* ; as contradistinct to all that submit not to his Name and Power, John 17. 9. Christs Mediatorship is undertaken for, and in behalf of the Church ; He *loved his Church*, and gave himself for it, that he might *sanctifie and cleanse it by the washing of water, through the Word*, that he might present it to himself a *glorious Church*, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be *holy, and without blemish*, Ephes. 5. 25, 26, 27. and this his Mediatorship is, and shall be *Ministred in and to the Church* ; to the bringing them into union with himself, and with the Father ; to the admiration of the glorious Angels who in the Church as a *speculum* do see and thereby

by come to know the manifold Wisdom of God: according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, by whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in him, Ephes. 3. 10, 11. that Assembly of men, which have received, and do profess the Lord Jesus Christ to be there alone Mediator, to reconcile them unto God, and make them eternally happy, constantly resigning up themselves unto him as their King, Priest, and Prophet; and duly attend the administrations of this his Office do formally and properly exist the Church of Christ Jesus.

The Church in this sence is by Divines distinguished into the Church *Triumphant*, *Militant*, *invisible*, and *visible*: not that there are so many distinct *specificall Churches*, for Christ the Head is but one; and the Church his Body is but one, united by the bond of one everlasting Covenant of Mediatourship; but because of the *various ministrations of the Mediatorship of Christ*, to the several Members of it, this one Church is differently denominated.

Triumphant; In respect of those who having fought the good fight of Faith, and finished their course, are passed from this vale of misery; insulting over Death, and the Devil, into everlasting glory; to the beatifical Vision

for Church-Communion. 38

Vision of their blessed Redeemer, in the highest Heaven, at the right hand of the Father, acting the Mediatour, by continual Intercessions for his Church. And these are members of the same Body, having a common interest in the whole; & have with other Members of the Church a common desire after the perfection of the body; and with their fellow Members, communicate in the desires and prayers for Christs appearance to judgment; crying, *how long, O*

Rev. 6. 10.
Significatur vehemens desiderium finalis liberationis Eccliesæ & hinc *sancti* Sanctorum in celis & terris dicitur. *Par. in Loc.*

Lord, how Long? and *come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Communion with these Members thus qualified, such as love Christ, cannot but hold, and pursue being careful to communicate in the same common desires.

Militant; In respect to those who under the conduct of Christ the Captain of their salvation; and under the Banner of his Cross, by the Power of his Death and sufferings; being compleatly armed with the whole armour of God, do wage a constant, and prevailing Warfare, against Satan, Sin, and the World, exposed to, but resisting all temptation; leading captivity captive; forgetting what is behind, and pressing forward, towards the price of our high calling which is in Christ Jesus;

not having apprehended, neither being already perfect; but following after, that
 Phil. 3. they may apprehend, that for which
 9, 10. they are also apprehended of Christ
 Jesus; and be found in him, not
 having their own Righteousness, which is of
 the Law, but that which is through the Faith of
 Christ, the righteousness which is of God by
 Faith.

Communion with the Church under this
 qualification; is the State and condition of
 all that are called by the Name of Christ;
 and brought into the Band of the Covenant,
 to them sealed by Baptism; wherein every
 Soul hath the same common Enemies, Opposi-
 tions, Assaults, Temptations and Dangers;
 the same common Conduct, Order, Armour,
 Encouragement, and Advantages;
 Heb. 10. amongst whom if any cowardly
 38. draw back, the Lord taketh no plea-
 sure in them, for some do but seem-
 ingly, and by Profession, what others do sin-
 cerely and in reality in the good fight of faith.
 And therefore the Church is again said to
 be

Invisible; In respect of those who are not
 only it may be (opportunity failing) not at
 all) Baptized with water; but also with
 the Holy Ghost; and so are truly regenerated,
 and

for Church-Communion. 33

and born a Jew; the Elect of God, begotten
 common sense of the Father unto a lively Hope,
 1 Pet. 1. 3 by the resurrection of Christ from
 the dead, and by the power of
 his Death, mortifying lust, and corruption,
 but living unto righteousness, and true holi-
 ness, a life of Faith in the Son of God, acting
 Graces in truth and power, not discernable
 by the Sons of men, but approved to God,
 who searcheth the heart, and unto
 Rom. 2. 29 him only: The qualities of this
 Church are common to all
 true Christians, who by vertue of the same
 Covenant, are acted by the same Spirit, and
 enjoy in common the same operations of grace,
 but cannot be determined by any mortal eye;
 only these are preached and declared in the
 World, as those which every Member of
 the Church professeth to, and without hy-
 pocrisie must pursue and obtain.

Visible, in respect of the called to Christ,
 who by the Baptism of Water are united to
 Christ, and having so put on the Lord, are
 incorporated into one body;
 of professed subjects to
 the Son of God, joynt so-
 cieties, and orderly Assemb-
 lies, submitting to the same common directi-
 ons of the Gospel; enjoying the same com-

Alii Christum induunt
 Symbolice & Sacra-
 mentotenus. Zanch.

mon Sacraments, Seals of the Covenant of Grace and assurances of the same common Faith, and by an equal and common discharge of Duties, and enjoyment of Christian Privileges, do profess in and unto the rest of the World in word and Deed, an open joynt, and common subjection to the ministration of Christs Mediatorship in order to their everlasting peace and happiness. And this is the Church the object of that communion, the care of which is charged on all that love Christ, concerning it therefore, let it be noted,

The Church visible is not a species or kind of Church distinct from the Church invisible: for these are not two Churches, but one Church:

Hæc distinctio non est distributio generis in species, quasi una esset Ecclesia visibilis & alia invisibilis. Apoc. II. 1. Cap. 3.

nor yet two parts of the Church, but one whole entire body, distributed into visible and invisible, by reason of an adjunct in the same subject. that communion which is invisibly enjoyed, and acted, whereof men can take no knowledge, nor make any certain judgement; but it is only known to God; who knoweth who are his, causeth the same Church to be called invisible: and that communion which is visibly professed, and enjoyed in the external ministrations of

for Church-Communion. 35

of Ordinances which every humane ear may hear, and every mans eye may see, causeth the Church to be called *visible*: The same persons, make the same Church *visible* and *invisible*: some enjoy Christ, and the operations of the Spirit *savingly, inwardly* in their Soules, and beyond what man can discern or conceive; but the same persons do and must also enjoy Christ *Symbolically, Externally*, by an outward subjection to the Word and Sacraments, the Administrations of his Grace, which all the World may see and judg: Some indeed put on Christ *symbolically*, and act communion with his Church *outwardly* by profession of the *same faith*, and subjection to the *same Ordinances* of Grace, and Worship, whereby they are seen to men to be united to Christ, and in communion with his Body; as animated by the *same Spirit*, and acting the *same Graces*, and enjoying the *same Comforts* with others really and indeed, but *Insensibly* as to men: These by actions *External*, obvious to humane sense, profess to, and among men, the same inward and *invisible Grace*; which indeed *they want*, and others according to and under the same Profession do *in truth* enjoy: All visible Members may not act and enjoy that invisible Grace and Communion with Christ and his Church, which they profess and seem

to the World to act and enjoy; but all the *invisible Members* of the Church must, by *visible communion*; and outward subjection to the ministration of Christs Mediatorship *profess* and testify to the World what they inwardly, and in truth act and enjoy in communion with Christ and his Church. Although there may be many visible Members of the Church *which shall perish*; and are not invisible; yet all the invisible Members of the Church, the Elect of God, which shall be certainly saved, must in order to their salvation be also *visible* according to their capacities and opportunities. For Christs Church is a *Society of men*, contradistinct to the *World*, and existent in the *World*, obvious to humane sense, as the *given of* of the *Father to Christ his Son*, Subjects of his *mediatory Kingdom* to him *united*, and among themselves enjoying communion each with other, the truth whereof cannot any way appear in, and to the World; but by *visible profession*, and therefore *all that make this Profession*, are by the same *terms of Relation*, and under the same *Epithites or Appellations* exhibited, and represented in, and to the World, as *united to Christ, and in communion with his Church*: Although many of them be, and may be such by *Profession only*, and not in truth, who seem to serve the Mediatour; by
whom,

whom, and in whose Method they refuse to be saved. Under the Old Covenant all were Israel, though not all of Israel; all Jews outwardly, though not all Jews inwardly, Rom. 2. 29. In the ministration of the new Covenant, as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. .2 .7. though many may be bewitched not to obey the truth, but having begun in the Spirit, be perfected by the Flesh; seeking salvation by the Law, to the making Christ of none effect to them, as did many visible Members of the Church at Galatia in Gal. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. 9, 10, 11, 16. 5. 2, 3, 4. and we are all baptized into one body, though some may through Pride become unnatural Members, 1 Cor. 12. 13. we are all one bread, and one body, and all partakers of Christ that one bread, though some may prophanly partake of Idol Sacrifices, and the Cup of Devils, 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. all are in the Scripture Dialect said to be Saints, Believers, Sons of God, and Christians. A Church in God, and in the Lord Jesus Christ, when many appear carnal by their Schisms, and are by false Doctrines drawn from the simplicity of Christ Jesus, and by prophane Practices, Rude and Disorderly walking, do sadly Minister cause of suspiti-

Induunt homines
Christum aliquando
usque ad sacramenti
perceptionem; alia
quando usque ad Iuxta
Sanctificationem. August

on that the *Christ professed by them is not in them*, and deserve to be cast out of the Church, 1 Cor. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. Christ himself hath declared all that profess to be his Disciples, Subjects to the ministration of his Mediatorship to be *Branches in him the true*

Multi in vite, opinione
hominum censentur,
& externa professione
nomen ecclesie habent;
cui reipsa radicem in
vite non habeat. Calv.
in. John 15.

Vine, though some bear not fruit, and so appear, not to have real inward union with him. It is to be wished that all visible Members, were, and will endeavour in themselves to be,

what they profess, and the Word of God (to the provocation of duty, conviction of their iniquity, and aggravation of their condemnation) doth declare them to be, and as such present them in, and oppose them to the World; but in reference to our communion, so long as they *profess* to pursue, act, and enjoy union with Christ, by *their visible subjection* to the Ministration of his Mediatourship; we must know them the Members of the Church of Christ with whom to hold communion is our duty; that true grace which forms, and constitutes a *true invisible Member* of the Church, will constrain care of communion with the *visible Members of the Church*, by which only we can witness a good confession of Christ our Mediatour before men.

2. The visible Church of Christ is *Catholick or Universal*; comprehending *all-men*, of what *Nation*, or *People* and *kindred*, *rank*, or *quality* throughout the *whole visible World*; professing *Christ the alone one Mediatour between God and Man* and *subjection to the Ministration of his Mediatorship*. The *Catholick Church* doth exist in and by *particular conventions, Societies and Assemblies* into which it is *duly, regularly, and by good Authority* distributed for the *more convenient ministrations of the Ordinances of Grace from*, and *worship to the Mediatour*; and whosoever will hold communion with the *Catholick Church* of Christ, must do it in communion with some *particular Church*, in and by which the *Catholick* doth exist, and is exhibited in the *World*; for the distinct *Assemblies or Churches* in the *World* make but *one Catholick Church*, no particular can be accounted *Catholick*, otherwise then as a member of the *universal Church*, enjoying an interest in the *common acts, and advantages of the whole*. It is a *Popish madness*, to the extending of an *holy Catholick Empire*, so to appropriate *Catholick* to the *Church of Rowe* as to necessitate uni-

Catholica Ecclesia est illa quæ diffusa est per universum orbem, Cyr.

Read Hudsons Vindication of the Unity and Essence of the Church Catholick visible.

on and relation to it alone, in all Doctrines and Dispensations of Church Order, and that as to the one thing necessary to salvation: The Church of Christ is but *one*, and cannot be *many*; Christ the Head is but *one*, and cannot have *many bodies* to influence as an head, any more then *many bodies* to be *many times offered*, in *many places* as a Sacrifice for quick and dead: These two are equally monstrous Notions. Christ is the *visible Head* of the *Catholick visible Church*. His Ministers are the *Catholick Organs*, of this *Catholick Body*; their Administration in the name of Christ, are *Catholick operations* of, in, and to the edification of this body: by *Baptism* they admit members and incorporate into the *Catholick*, not any *particular Church*, but only in the common capacity of *Catholick communion*; by the *Lords Supper* they edifie, establish, and testify communion with the *one body of Christ*; and by *Excommunication*, they cast out of the *Catholick communion*, to the destruction of the flesh, not of a *particular Assembly*, which we find, proveth the *nourishing, and strengthening of the flesh*, whilst in contempt of the censure, the excommunicated constitute a new Church, and create another Body of Christ, making as many Mystical, as the Popish Priests by consecration, make natural bodies of Christ their Lord and

and Maker: the *Promises of Grace* are preached; the Priviledges of Peace with God *possessed*; In the Ministry of these; and gifts and abilities to ministration, are exercised, *in the particular Churches* not to them otherwise then on the common account of Members of the Catholick body, the Church to which they are given for the edifying of the body of Christ, *till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man*, Ephes. 4, 12, 13. What communion we hold with any particular Church, as a Church of Christ, hath its *relation to*, and *and common influence on the Catholick visible Church*, of which the particular is only a Member. Infidels converted to the Faith must adjoyn themselves *to some particular Church*, where by they may enjoy the due administrations of Christ his Mediatorship, that they may by Baptism *be incorporated*, and by Word, Prayer, and other Ordinances herein dispensed, *be edified in the Catholick visible body of Christ Jesus*: and Christians, duly united to, and *edified in particular Churches*, must be very cautious *how*, on *what grounds*, and in *what manner* they *withdraw* from, *refuse*, *decline*, and *deny* communion with such Churches, least they condemn the generation of the just, and divide from the *Catholick visible body* of Christ, out of which there may
be

be great pretences to piety, but no *salvation* nor possibility thereof.

3. The Church Catholick visible may exist in a *small number*, in a *dark, cloudy, and obscure state*, and condition; Defection, disorder, and persecution may not only in particular Nations and Countries, but over the whole World *darken the Catholick visible Church*, so that an enemy may insult as if it *were extinct*. The few true Members of it be greatly afflicted, and think themselves are left alone in the worship of their dear Redeemer; yet it *truly exists the Church of Christ*; to be sought after with *care and diligence*, as that in *communion* with which the refreshing influence of Christs presence, can quiet our Souls, and secure us against the danger of *deviation*; in which our Text is the apt Prayer of a poor scattered Member; Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest? where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions.

[*Visibility* we can be content to allow as a note of the Church of Christ; which must consist of men, in the midst of men, professing by word and deed *subjection to the ministrations* of the Mediatorship: But *perspicuity* by a numerous multitude, and outward prof-
peri-

perty, pomp and glory is only to be assigned by the men who make the *succession of Lordly Prelates*, and a Papal chair, the only mark of the Church of Christ; unto which sort of men demanding, where *was the Church before Luthers time*; the Protestants have well returned, where the *Church was in the dayes of Elias*; when by the general defection of *Israel*, and the violence of persecution it was reduced to the *seven thousand which bowed not the knee to Baal*, who driven into caves, dens, and private corners, did not appear to the Prophet, who thought, he was, and complained, *I am left alone*; When the *high places* were in *Israel*, and the *image of jealousy was in the Temple*; those few God-fearing *Israelites* which worshipped the God of *Abraham* according to his own institutions did exist the *Catholick visible Church of God*: and when on the appearance of the man of sin, and the growth of the Antichrist; the universality of Christians, made defections from the true Ministrations of Christ the Mediator, and put his *Apostles and Saints* into a capacity of mediation with him; and advanced the *Mother of our Lord* unto the command of her Son, in the intercessions of his
 Media-

See the defence of the Apology of the Church of England, by the Bishop of Sarum. pa. 491, 492. and all Protestant Writers against the Papists.

Mediatorship, and *Transubstantiated* the public communion, by the

Christ's Flock is a little flock, and the woman in the Revelation is often driven into, and hidden in the *wilderness*. Blow at the root. pa. 102.

existency of an innumerable number of the *natural bodies* of our dear Redeemer; and *turned* all Ministration into an *unknown Tongue*, as the visible testimony,

and profession of union with the Church of *Rome*, not of Christ, whose Mediatorship, and the Ministrations thereof they had destroyed (as to what they could do) and persecuted unto death, all that would not communicate with them in so doing; those *few* which would not receive the mark of the Beasts; but *unto death and bands* professed their subjection to the Ministrations of Christ, and his alone Mediatorship, were the Church Catholick, visibly by their sufferings for such profession, *the testimony of Jesus*; Should a Papist ask me where was the *Catholick Church* existent in *Queen Maries* dayes; I should promptly answer *in the Congregation of London* subjected to the Ministration of the Mediatorship of Christ (according to the *English Service*, set out by *King Edward* the sixth) by *John Rough*, and such like Assemblies, by the violence of persecution, under that general defection from the same. Such as draw the ministrations of
Christ

for Church-Communion. 49

Christ's Mediatorship into dens, and caves, private houses, and places; whilst it is truly (though in some disorder) Ministred in open and publick Assemblies; are not to be commended; for the *visibilty of the Church of Christ* should not be voluntarily *obscured*, but kept as plain, open, and publick (to the honour of our Lord, and extention of his Kingdom in the World) as may be; and such who conclude the Church *is not*, or is not *visible*, when by defection, disorder, and persecution it is forced to abscond, and run into private holes, and corners, only to be seen by the light of the Fires, by which, its enemies endeavour to consume the *bush burning but not consumed*; are much to be condemned; for that they conclude the Candle cannot be seen which with all their visible force they attempt to blow out, but cannot: Or the *City* is not on an Hill, which is only kept out of sight by the Trenches, Ditches, Assaults, and Batteries of the besieging enemy.

That we may one day and to Eternity triumph with Christ our Lord in glory; Let us maintain the *Fight of Faith*, with patience and courage animated by his Spirit, Strengthened by his Grace, which Men cannot see, and encouraged by

by the Joyes with which the Hypocrites cannot meddle; in communion with the Catholick visible Church, in Professed Subjection to the Ministration of Christs Mediatorship; for this is the Church-Communion, which, must be the care of all that love the Lord Jesus.

CHAP.

C A P. III.

Of Communion with the Church, what it is, wherein it consists.

HAVING determined the Church, which must be the Object of Communion; we must consider the communion to be held with it; which must be the immediate Object of care in such as love Christ.

Communion, is, a Latine term, and answerable to the Greek *κοινωνία* it is the result of union; and a communion communication of all the things of, and in a Society, to the common good, and benefit of the Society, and every Member thereof; In communion whatsoever belongs to the whole, is made common to each Member, and the actions of every Member operateth to the good, and advantage of the whole: Be communion Natural, Civil, or Religious, we shall find community to be the form of it.

In *Naturals*: The animation of the heart, the directions of the head, the actions of the hand, and the motions of the feet, are common to the body, and reciprocally communicated to the body; The Soul is *tota in to-*

Aretii problem. lib. 2.
p. 35.

to, & in qualibet parte tota; it animateth every the least Member in the Body, and is concerned in the motion, and condition of every the least member: the 14, 15, 16. Head guideth the whole man, the least finger aketh for the whole; and the least corn on a little Toe, affecteth the whole body; So that the Head cannot say to the Hand, I have no need of thee; nor the Heart, to the least Toe, I am not concerned in thee.

In civils, The concerns of friends become common; Love the bond of union, leads to a community of all Gifts, Abilities, and Enjoyments; Love me, love my Dog; and I and mine are at your service is the proper Language of civil communion: the Philosophers commenting on this communion, make goods, rents, revenues, servants, children, (and the Platonists extending beyond Sobriety) Wives reciprocally common among friends:

Cicero de Legibus.

the Civilians steer'd by that maxime of Ciceroes, inter quos communio legis, inter eos communio juris est, determine, they that are governed by the same common Laws, to them appertain the same common Rights, and Liberties: Men incorporated in Cities and

Actus Commutatorii
communicant hinc res
inde tacta, ad utilita.

Comp

Companies, are influenced by the same Authority, directed by the same Councils, enjoy the same Privileges and mutually, and reciprocally act (in their capacities) for the advantage or benefit of the whole City, or Company so united. *Religious Communion* relateth to God, or to the Church of God.

Communion with God, is a reciprocal Communication of the things of God, and Man in common to each other. The Wants, Weaknesses, and infirmities of man are communicated to God, and Christ. In all our afflictions, God is said to be affected with them, Isa. 63. 9. And our High Priest, now at the right hand of the Father, can be touched with our Infirmities, Saith the Apostle, Hebr. 4. 11. and the power, wisdom, goodness, and holiness of God, the Death, Passion, Resurrection, the Merits, and Mediatorship, yea the Joy, and Blessedness of God, and Christ are made common to men to Christ united, 1 John 1. 3. Whatsoever interrupts, or hinders this Community, destroyes this Communion, therefore the Apostle cryeth out, *What Communion hath light with darkness*; and Christ with Belial, 2 Cor.

6. 14, 15. *Communion* referred to the Church, is a *common enjoyment of the things of the Church*; Word, Prayers, Sacraments, Censures, Promises, Priviledges, and whatsoever concerns the *body of Christ*: So that all by *Baptism* entred, and united unto the Church; (other bond of union I cannot admit) have an *equal right*, and *common enjoyment*, and *joynt participation* of the things belonging to the *whole Church*, and perform their duties in order to *publick benefit*, and advantage of the *whole Christian Society*: and this consists in two things.

1. *Participation of Priviledges*; So that all Baptized into this one Body, and subjected to the Ministration of the Mediatorship by an *equal right*, and in a *joynt communion*, have the Oracles of God to them explained, the Word Preached, their Prayers and praises sent up to Heaven, the Sacraments (the Arguments of Faith and assurances of Gods Love and Favour) administred, the promises of Grace, pardon of Sin, Power against Satan, Sanctification, Justification, everlasting life and glory made to the Church, are in common exhibited to all, and appropriated to every Member of the Church, *as a Member of that body*; and ministerial reproof, fraternal correction, and the censures of the Church, suspending from some Priviledges,

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ledges, or Excommunicating from all; (the Antidotes against Sin, and Corrosives of corruption) concerns all, and every the Members united to the Church, therewith to be affected; thereby to be awed; and therein concerned as Members of the Body, thereby to be preserved from danger, and destruction: So that all Christians by Faith united to Christ, by Baptism united to the Church, his Body; have an equal right, and injoynt Society, are animated by the same Spirit, guided by the same Head, ruled by the same Law, encouraged by the same Promises, established by the same Sacraments, awed by the same censures, and possess the same Adoption and Son-ship with equal right to the same Priviledges; in the Common Ministration of Christs Mediatorship to his Church.

2. A common, Joynt, Mutual, and Reciprocal performance of duties, each to other; As united members, combined, and conspiring the good, and edification of the Body, to the increase of the whole. And these Duties concern

Communio Ecclesie est, corpori Ecclesie adscribi; vera invocatione, adoratione, fide, & spe colere deum; eodem articulos fidei agnoscere, eodem verbo Dei uti & niti, iisdem Sacramentis initiari, Aret. in 1 John 1: 3.

1. The Adoration of God and Christ our

E 2

Lord

Lord and Head; which is to be yielded in common, in the *Assemblies of his Saints, and Congregation of his people*; in which any member not defective in his Worship, must not dare to be absent: Such are *common Prayers, and Praises*, to him made by the *Whole*, in behalf of the whole Church, or any member thereof; from which any that believing God a God *bearing Prayers in the Assemblies of his People* must not withdraw; the *publick reading and Preaching* of the Word, which they who can read in private, must not (be contented so to do) decline and refuse, the *Ministration of Sacraments*, which dispensed in common, must be attended by all Members of the Body of Christ; For not Bread and Wine in private, and personal use, but the *Bread which we the Ministers of the Church, in the Church, or Assembly, break*, is the *Communion of the body of Christ*.
 1 Cor. 10. and the cup which we *bless*, or consecrate in the publique Assemblies, is the *communion of the blood of Christ*; which every Christian is bound to communicate, that they may witness *we being many, are but one bread*: All the members of the Church are bound in joynt Society, and publick Assembly to perform all Duty, and devotion to God; every act that may signifie their *relation* to, and *dependence*

dance on Christ the Mediatour ; and their union each to other.

2. The Duties of Communion to be performed concern the *Edification of the Church*, wherein every member is *useful*, and must be serviceable, according to their several places and capacities, communicating those various *Gifts*, they have received from Christ, for the common benefit of his Church. not only the *Ministers of the Church*, whose Place, and Office bind them, to give themselves to *Reading, Meditation, and Prayer*, unto the improving of their Parts, and gifts, and with care, and diligence to exercise the same (improved) unto the benefit of the Church, *dividing the Word of God aright*, and approving themselves *workmen which need not be ashamed*, but also the *private and particular members of the Church*, in communion with this Body, must act their parts, unto the *edification of the whole* ; they must as members of the Body, be *affected with the condition of the Church*, mourning when the Church, in whole, or in any part is *afflicted, diseased, distressed, persecuted, or oppressed* ; and rejoycing in its *Peace, Welfare, Prosperity, and increase* ; Sympathy is the due result of Union, and proper act of Communion with any Society, more especially the Church. Each member of the Church must

be ready on all occasions to *Minister to others* for the good of the whole; *Fraternal correction*, and holy conference, speaking of the things of God, Mal. 3. 16, 17. *Exhorting one another daily*, whilst it is called to day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin, &c. Hebr. 3. 13. *Considering one another to provoke unto love, and to good works*. Hebr. 10. 23. If any be weak in the Faith, *the strong must receive him*, and bear him up, endeavouring to strengthen the feeble knees, and the bands that hang down: Rom. 14. 1. Hebr. 12. 12, 13. If any man be overtaken with a fault, they who are strong in Faith, *must restore him with a Spirit of meekness*. Gal. 6. 1, 2. They must *warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak*, and be patient towards all men, 1 Thes. 5. 14. Great is the benefit the Church receiveth by the holy conference of her particular members; the *Iberians* were converted, by the

Socrates Scholasticus
Ecclef. Historie, Lib. 1.
cap. 19, 20. Greek, 15,
16. English.

serious Discourse of a captive maid concerning Christ her Saviour: The *Indians* were brought to the Christian Faith by the conference of *Edeſus*, and *Frumentius*, private Christians. *Justin Martyr* tells us he was brought to the knowledg of Christ, by the *patience* of the *Martyrs*, and *Christian*

conference of a certain old man which used to meet him in the Walks of his retirement ; And old Father *Latimer* was drawn from the Idolatries of *Rome* , and the Papists by conference with *Bilney*. The same Scripture which *chargeth the communion of the Church*, *chargeth the particular Members of the Church* , in their places, and according as they have opportunity, to *communicate their gifts* , and graces to the edifying of the whole : We must in the communion of the Church , not only receive , but also Communicate ; by *rebukes* , *Exhortations*, and *admonitions* unto other members, that the Body of Christ may grow to a perfect man, by that which every Joynt supplyeth.

These Acts of Edification to be performed towards the Church by vertue of their communion in it, must be managed under this double caution.

Caut. 1. All Acts of private Edification must be , not against , but subservient to the Acts of publick Communion with the Church : Separate not from the Church , sleight not publick Assemblies, whilst you are zealously acted to perform the private Acts of Church communion. The late Prelates of our Church did charge, and oppose the very

private conventions; of the old Puritans as *Conventions* opposite, and destructive to Church Assemblies; those good men were more sober, and true to Church-communion; But I would to God, some who pretend to spring from those good men, had not too much justified that charge as *true*, preferring the *private conferences* of particular members, unto the *publick ministrations* of the Church: Sure I am the sinful Schism of *Independency*, and shameful separation of *Congregationallists*, Paganizing all the *English Church*, and pretending to 120 gathered Churches did spring from this bitter root. Alas! how many among us at this day, leave the Publick Assemblies of Christians, break from the communion of the Church, decline, and despise publick ministrations, and spend their Sabbaths in *private Colloquies* of the things of God, If not *Quaking Soliloquies*; Can you think to edifie the Church

The Reader may look into my *Quærela piorum*, or Godly conference, which was Preached and Printed to the bounding of private acts of Religion by Christians, that they might not interfere with publick communion.

by performing Acts of *liberty*? and neglecting Acts of *Duty*? by exercising the *outward members*, without regard to, nay with the contempt of *due nurture*; members of the Body, may through a proud sense of their motion, and activity, rise into the contempt

tempt of, and refuse communion with the belly;
 the publick Ministry to their motion; but
 their languide operations will soon correct
 their folly, and constrain them to know they
 cannot act without the influence of publick
 communion. The Holy Ghost sensible that
 pride, and curiosity would easily transport
 particular members, in private Acts of com-
 munion, to the neglect, and contempt of pub-
 lick Assemblies, hath bounded the same with
 this very caution now given you, Hebr. 10.
 23, 24. Consider one another, to provoke un-
 to love, and good Works, that is, the private
 Duties of Edification; not forsaking the assem-
 bling of your selves together, as the manner of
 some is, there is the caution; which notes to us;
 Schism from the Church, soon sprung in the
 Church; The manner of some was to sepa-
 rate from Publick Assemblies; and this was
 occasion'd, (I dare not say caused) by their
 mutual private conference; and therefore
 these are advised, but under this charge, that
 we keep to publick communion, and forsake not
 the Assembling of our selves together,
 the resorting to the Synagogue or *ἐκκλησία* in
 place of Assembly as the word in the
 Original doth express it. Calvin on this Text
 doth observe, Schism from the Church had its first O-
 riginal from the contempt of

Hinc apparet primam
 Schismatum omnium O-
 riginem hanc fuisse,

the

quod superbi homines
cum aliorum contemp-
tu sibi plus iusto placue-
runt.

Calv. in Loc.

Alterum: *magis*
membrum nobis igitur
commendat, non solum
amorem: sed & reve-
rentiam erga ministeri-
um Ecclesie & studium
frequentandi cætus Ec-
clesiasticos ad tuen-
dam societatem & uni-
tatem Ecclesie. *Par. 10.*

*the Church, by men seem-
ing proud of their abilities
in mutual Exhortation:*

And *Par. 10.* doth well
note, that with the *Exhor-
tation to mutual conference,*
the Apostle doth charge
*a reverence to the Publick
Ministry, and Assemblies
of the Church.* And much
like unto this seemeth the
advice of the Apostle in

the Epistle to *Jude*, where the duty of *mutu-
al Edification* by the private acts of particu-
lar members is presented, with a caution to
shun those which *separate, sensual, not ha-
ving the Spirit.* It is sad, when Duties of
Communion with the Church cannot be
made consistent, but one must work a con-
tempt of the other, to the destruction, not
edification of the Body.

2. *Caution.* In performing Acts of Private
Edification, *keep within your Sphere*, and
*do only those things which are proper to your
station:* Take heed of acting your care of,
and Communion with the Church with
an *hasty affection*, and *precipitate motion*, and
improper action, lest you provoke God to
a *Perez-Uzzah* to the disturbance of the
church

for Church Communion.

Churches peace : Remem-
ber *Uzzah* was one who
worshipped the God of Is-
rael, and attended on his
Ark, His strong affecti-
ons made him, when the
Ark shook, to lay his hand
on it, and for this, be-
cause *he had not the charge*
of it, he lost his life; God
needs not his peoples sin,
and disorderly motion to support his shaking
Ark. Be as zealous as you will, or can be in
praying each with, and for other, in exhort-
ing, admonishing, rebuking, perswading, and
comforting each other in your Private capa-
city; and far be it from the sons of men herein
to disturb you. But be careful you meddle
not with *Acts of Office and Authority*, which
peculiarly belong to the *Ministers of the*
Church, Ordained to the Ministration there-
of: For private men to *Constitute Churches*,
consecrate things to an holy Use and End,
to create *Laws* to cast out of the Church; and
to counsel the Churches *censure*, will disorder
the Assembly, distract Society, disturb the
peace of the Church, and bring on them-
selves *perdition in the gainsaying of Corah*.
[Christians do in your places, the proper acts
of your places, keeping constant communi-

An unwarranted hand
cannot so lightly touch
the Ark, but he strikes
the God that dwells in
it: *Uzzah* meant no
otherwise but well, in
putting forth his hand
to stay the Ark, but the
best intencion cannot
excuse, much less war-
rant an unlawful acti-
on. *Bishop Hall Con-*
templat. Lib. 15. an
Uzzah and the Ark.

on with the Publick Assemblies of the Church : So shall you appear living members; So the *whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual working of every part, shall make increase of the Body to the edifying it self in love, Ephel. 4.16.*

for Church-Communion 61

C A P. IV.

Of the Saints care for communion with the Church, what it is, and the reasons of it.

HAVING discovered the Church the Object, and communion, the immediate Act towards that Object: We are to consider the care, concerning that communion, and the reasons of that care.

When we say, they who love Christ must be careful of communion with the Church of Christ: We intend to note to you, that they who love Christ, being convinced of duty, sensible of want, enflamed with desire, must be earnest in Prayer to Christ, and industrious in endeavours for communion with the Church of Christ, and this care supposeth to it self a double subject, and double act, according to the different capacity of that double subject. (to wit)

1. Such as want communion with the Church, must make it their care to obtain it.

2. Such as have communion with the Church, must make it their care to maintain it.

1. Such

1. Such as want communion with the Church, must make it their care to obtain it (that is) they who are informed in the Doctrine of Salvation, and word of Life; believing in the Lord Jesus, the alone Mediator between God and Man; and so are converted to the Faith; must make it their care to obtain communion with the Church, (that is to say) they must not live alone, and think to enjoy Christ in their solitudes; but know it to be their duty, desire, and endeavour, by all means possible, to be Baptized, incorporated into the Church Catholick visible; that they may as living Members, of Christs body, on equal right, and in common fellowship, with the whole body enjoy the Priviledges of Grace, and the ministrations of the Mediatorship; and perform the duties of members in that Mystical Body. As many as gladly received the word, were Baptized and added to the Church: For God added daily to the Church such as should be saved, Acts 2. 41, 47. Saul converted, travelled to Jerusalem, and Assayed to joyn himself to the Church, Acts 9. 26. God may by the discourse of Private Christians call Souls to Christ Jesus, but such animated by the same common Spirit, cannot but study by all possible means to be united, and enjoy Communion with the Church

for Church-Communion. 23

church Catholick visible : We read that the *Indians* were converted by the discourses of *Edeſus*, and *Fruementius*; (who in their infant ſtate, were baptized, and brought among the *Indians*, by whom their Father *Meropius* was ſlain) and built themſelves places of Aſſembly, but deſiring openly to profeſs ſubjection to, and enjoy the miniſtrations of Chriſt the Mediatour; do not content themſelves to live alone; nor yet form themſelves into a ſelf conſtituted Church, and lay their hands on their own heads; but ſend *Fruementius* to *Alexandria*, to ſignifie their conversion; and to ſeek communion with Chriſts Catholick Body; and intreat ſome *Minifters* to diſpence unto them the things of Chriſt and his Church: *Athanaſius* Ordains *Fruementius* to the work of the Miniſtry; he returns by the Catholick Authority of Chriſt, and his Church; forms them into a Church; and miniſters unto them the Ordinances of publick, and Catholick communion. ſo alſo the *Iberians* converted by a captive Maid built Churches, but ſent to *Constantine*, to intreat, Miniſters might be ſent to incorporate them into the Church, and miniſter to them the things of the Mediatour, as common members of his body. Whoever is converted to the Faith, muſt

Socrates Scholaſti. Ec-
cleſiaſti. hiftoriaz lib. 1.
cap. 19. 20. Græc. 15,
16. Engliſh.

must, and cannot but seek communion with the Church of Christ.

It is a *Lamentation*, and to be a lamentation, in a settled Church where Baptism is commonly administered, to the incorporating members into the Church Christs Body: too many may be found among us, who by the sin of their prophane Parents, *despising their birth-right*, though born members of the Church Catholick visible, *have not been Baptized*; but are yet to be incorporated into that Body: Let such know their care must be, in sorrow for their parents sin, to see their want of union, and communion with the Church, and to seek to obtain it.

And if any be, (as true Saints may, be for the destruction of the flesh, that the soul may be saved) 1 Cor. 5. 5. *cast out of the communion of the Church* for their impenitency, in impiety; they must not slight and scorn the censures of the Church; and be content to live in that state, but considering, what the Church doth rightly bind on earth, is bound in heaven: by hearty sorrow seek to be restored to the communion of the Church, 1 Cor. 5. 2. Cor. 2. no soul united to Christ can, nor must live out of communion with the Church.

2. The Subjects of this care, are such as are in communion with the Church; and they must

must take care to retain it. Having been baptized into the Catholick Body; and enjoying the communion of the whole, in the publick ministrations of the Mediatorship to, and in some particular Churches; take heed they do not *sleight, neglect, refuse, decline, deny, much less, contemn, cast off, and rend themselves from the communion of the Church,* in the common ministrations of the Mediator. The Primitive Churches continued together in the Apostles Doctrine in Publick Prayers, in fellowship, and the breaking the Eucharistical bread, *Acts 2. 42.* yet those purer times of the Church, had some disposed to separation, occasioning that caution, *not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is,* Heb. 10. 24. Some then brake the Communion of the Church; *They went out from us, because they were not of us;* 1 John 2. 19. Sensual men, then separated, having not the Spirit. *Jude. 19.* Schisms discovering saints to be carnal not Spiritual, did very early disturb the peace of the Church, 1 Cor. 3. 3. Such therefore as are united, must make it their care to *keep in, and with the body;* and exercise and enjoy the communion they have obtained.

The care for communion with the Church incumbent on both or either of these subjects according to their capacity, either ob-

60 *The Ministers*
taining what they want, or retaining what they enjoy must consist in, and be exerted by these acts.

1. *Sight of duty*: Their mind must be informed, and judgment convinced, that *communion with the Church*, is not a thing indifferent, to be slighted, used or not used, enjoyed or refused, at our will and choyce; but necessary, and *indispensable duty*, not to be omitted or neglected: A good Divine of our own, observeth that among all the Heresies collected by the Fathers, he find's not this *communion with the Church is*

J. Cr. *good but not necessary*; and another

Reverend Minister some time related G. F. to *New England*; In a serious disquisition from separation, maketh alike Observation, that among all the *Errors* condemned by the Synod of the Church of *New England* he finds not this: For with the one, and the other render this reason, *communion with the Church is so evident to any Sociable Christian, that none of any Sect could deny the necessity thereof*: And they both observe, our age to have formed, and produced this Monster: For many among us, casting off the communion of the Church, fortifie themselves against all Ministerial rebukes, with this fancy, *the communion of the Church is good, but not necessary*, in somuch that if a

Minister

for Church-Communion. &c

Minister Preach concerning Christ the Head, they are pleased, they hear with delight, and judge that Gospel-Preaching, but if he come from the Head, to discourse concerning the union of the Body, and communion with the Church, they are distasted, dissatisfied, and cry, *what is this to salvation of the soul?* as if the holy Catholick Church were blotted out of their Creed, and a member might hold communion with the Head, and not be in communion with the Body, and men must be judged true visible Christians though never seen in the Assemblies of them. Let me tell you, he that correcteth not this error in his mind, cannot act a care for communion with the Church. The mind is the guide of the whole man, the understanding is the chief faculty of the soul; against this the Will may sometimes rebell: but without this the will cannot move; *ignoti nulla cupido*, no object is desired before it be known; or otherwise then as it is known. Let men keep their ears from hearing, their Eyes from reading, and their minds from knowing the Doctrine of the communion of the Church, and they will soon be of opinion, *they may, or may not* hold communion with it. For my part I see not how Ministers who forbear to study and Preach, and people who refuse and *stomack* to hear and read

the Doctrine of communion with the Church, as if a thing not concerning salvation of the immortal souls, will approve themselves to Christ the Head; careful of Church-communion. Certainly the Psalmist saw necessity of duty when he made his residence in

Gods house, the *one thing necessary* he desired of the Lord, and preferred a day in Gods house, better than a thousand elsewhere. Church-union

and communion was certainly a Duty, and matter of necessity to the Saints, in the apprehension of the Apostles who charged *Schisms in the Church*, (much more from the Church) to be the character of men carnal, not spiritual; and by Apostolical Authority they became invective against those who separate as sensual, and not having the Spirit; and against those who caused Divisions in and among the Saints: and frequently asserted the Church as a body compacted, increaseth and groweth to perfection in union with the Head, by the due supply, and operation of every Joynt in a common participation of priviledges, and performance of duties.

2. *Sence of want.* Men of care, are men of offence, penurie provoketh anxiety, and anxiety reflecteth indigency: The good Householder, who like a Christian careth for his household

for Church-Communion. 69

household, *seeth* the want, and *feelet* the want of his family; Strong Acts of Faith, usually result from quickest sense: Want of communion with the Church, a sense of the sometime (then impeded) going up to the house of God, with a *multitude*, with the *multitude which kept holy-day*, constrained that affectionate outcry, *O when shall I come and appear before God in Zion*, Psal. 42. The incestuous person cast out of the communion of the Church, feeling the want thereof, was *almost swallowed up with grief*, 2 Cor. 2:7. It is a Solæcism in Nature for the hand to say to the foot, *I have no need of thee*, and the Foot to say to the Head, *I have no need of thee*: And it is a Solecism in Religion, for the members of Christ to think, they can *subsist*, and his body may be *edified*, and brought to perfection, without *union* and *communion* among themselves. *Aesop's Fables*, hath well taught the *members* to be careful of *communion* in Publick Ministration to and by the belly; by the *languid members*, which soon appeared, when that was neglected and contemned. Let the Psalmist but want communion in Gods house a little while and his faith fails him, *his feet almost slip*, Psal. 37. They are *dead members* which are without any *Sence* of communion with the Body; in this case the *void* of care, are *void of life*.

3. *Souls desire of Communion with the Church.* Care affects the soul with desire and fear; it animates and acts all the passions, in pursuit of its object, and therefore care is called *anxiety* eating into the heart and soul, raising a thirsty appetite, and longing desire to enjoy, *As the Hart panteth for the water-brooks, so my soul thirsteth after thee, O God; O when shall I appear before thee in Zion?* The communion of Gods people was the act of *David's* care, *Psal. 42. 2.* The Saints in our Text being sick of love, cry out with earnest desire, *Oh! shew me thy Church where thou feedest, wherethou makest thy flocks to rest at noon?* The Saints care for Church-communion doth operate in every Believer, (in the nature, though not in the degree of it) *St. Paul's* desire, *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift; to the end you may be established, that I may be comforted together with you; by the mutual faith of you and me, Rom. 1. 11, 12.* Faint desires of communion with the Church, maketh men fall from it on light grounds, and slender provocations.

4. *Supplication to Christ for guidance and direction:* Prayer is the proper vent of care, this easeth the Soul, be careful in nothing, but in every thing by Prayer and Supplication make your requests known unto God, *Phil. 4. 6.*

Thus

Thus did *David* in the case of Communion with the Church, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek, that I may dwell in the house of God*, Psal. 27. 4. So the Souls concerned in our Text, present their desire, in an earnest Prayer to Christ, Tell me (Oh thou whom my Soul loveth) where thou feedest, wherethou makest thy Flocks to rest at noon, &c.

5. *Sedulity of endeavours for Communion with Christs Church*: True care is active, and industrious; the Natural and Genuine operation of Hope and fear: *Anxiety* without *Activity* to obtainment; is the anguish of the Soul, and argument of idle sluggishness or diffidence and despair: But when *Sedulity* in motion towards the end, attends the desires of it, it is a right act of care; God in the ordinary course of Providence works by means; *trust in Divine Providence* doth not exclude; but include humane Prudence and diligence; Man must in the exercise of his Faith be industrious in the use of means, as if he had no God to trust, and yet trust Divine Providence, as if he had no means to use, and all humane operations were in vain. King *Asa* in his pious care for his people, gathered five hundred and fourscore thousand men, all the power he had against the *Ethiopian*, and

and cryed unto God, *we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this great multitude,*
 1 Chron. 14. Prayers to God, without industry in means, are but *lazy wishes*; the Sluggards desire that cannot obtain; the Ministers of the Church must be much in *Prayer* for Divine assistance in their Ministration; but they must also give
 1 Tim. themselves much to *Reading*, and
 4.13,15. *Meditation*. Christian souls in the cloudy state of the Church must not only *cry to Christ for guidance*, but also *use means*, make enquiry, run up and down, be sedulous and diligent in all good endeavours to find, *where Christ feedeth*, where *he maketh his flock to rest*. The Primitive Christians cleaving to the Church, under the clouds of Persecution, *sold their possessions*, and all that they had, to *hold the communion of the Church*, and continue in the Apostles Doctrine, *Acts 2. 45, 46*. Divine assistance, the answer to Prayer, is always given to the *Studious head and diligent hand*. When sense of duty raiseth *desires* in the soul, and *sence of want* supplicates Divine grace, and guidance, and *sets the whole man on Diligent Endeavours* to discover Christs true Church, and hold communion with it; then he that loveth Christ, will exist *truly careful of his duty*, and not till then.

We now come to consider the *Reasons* which must inforce this *care* of communion with Christs true Church, on every Soul which truly loves Christ the Lord ; and they are many noted by Divines ; But I shall reduce them to these four, in a due climax, enforcing each other, and from the lesser rising to the greater, all of them perswading all, that love Christ to live in communion with the Church of Christ.

1. To *shew to the world* their relation and subjection to Christ.

2. To *serve Christ* with solemn and required worship.

3. To *secure to themselves* the Covenant of Grace, and the Priviledges thereof.

4. To *save themselves* from the Danger to which Communion with the Church will expose them.

Let us with meekness and seriousness consider the weight and cogency of these, and contradict the verity of the Proposition who can. We shall therefore consider them in their order, and be the more brief, because they carry their evidence beyond the denial of any. And first,

1. *Reas.* Such as love Christ must be careful to keep communion with the Church of Christ, that they may *shew to, and profess in the World their relation and subjection to*
Christ,

Christ the Son of God, and alone Mediator between God and Man. External Profession of Christ is by all confessed a *duty necessary to salvation*; this is one Essential part of true Religion, *with the heart man believes, and with the tongue professeth to salvation, Rom. 10. 10.* God hath commanded it as a duty, *1 Pet. 3. 15.* Promised salvation to the performance of it *Mat. 10. 32. Rom. 10. 10.* threatned the neglect hereof with the greatest evil, *Matth. 10. 33.* So *Mar. 8. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12.* this induceth others to *know and receive Christ*; the neglect of this *discourageth* men from believing in the Son of God, many such reasons are urged by Divines, to perswade an *open & most publick profession of the Mediator* unto all which, let me add, that which cannot but move the affections of such as love the Lord Jesus, and that is this; an *open, general, and publick Profession of Christ the Mediator, our Relation and Subjection to him,* is the glory given him of the Father as the reward of his obedience in the work of the Mediatorship; and no mean degree of his Exaltation, *Phil. 2. 10.* God hath exalted him, and given him a name above every name: That to him all creatures should be subject, and every tongue should confess him to be Lord unto the glory of God.

God the Father. None that love Christ would rob him of his honour, the reward of so great humiliation for man, nor refuse or deny it, but be ready to yield, and ascribe it to him, with all care, and in such way as is most pleasing to him, and may be most publick in the world.

Profession of Relation and Subjection to Christ the Mediatour is only made by *keeping communion* with his Church visible in the Ministrations of his Mediatorship. All the *Gentiles* who under the Law believed the true God, were called by the name of the God of Jacob, and joyned themselves to the house of Israel, were proselyted to the Church of the Jews, and lived in communion with them to the profession thereof. And under the Gospel all that profess Faith in Christ Jesus are and must be added to the Church visible; and live in communion with them, in their most publick Assemblies, unto the open profession of his name. The Church is Christs Kingdom in the World, not of the World; but contradistinct to the World (whereof Satan is said to be the God, 2 Cor. 4. 4.) and all that are given him of the Father, are called out of the World, that by joynt and common subjection to his Scepter, the Rule and Government of him their Lord, they may be known to be his, and not

of the world; This his Kingdom was promised in the Old Testament to exist in the Catholick communion of his Subjects in all the Nations of the World, publickly professing his name, *Psal. 72. 8. He shall have dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the Rivers to the end of the Earth. Isa. 2. 2. 3, 4. It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lords house (that is his Church) shall be established on the top of the Mountains; and shall be exalted above the Hills, and all Nations shall flow unto it; and many people shall say, come let's go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob.* The Scriptures of the Old Testament do abound with Prophecies of the *Publick Profession of Christs Name*, in the general and open communion of his people. (*Acts 2.*) And the Histories of the New Testament do abundantly testifie the accomplishment of the same, the thousands that were converted to Christ Jesus were daily added to his Church, all of them (*Acts 8. 5.*) that should be saved. They that gave themselves to Christ, gave themselves to the Church by the will of Christ. by continuing in communion in constant and open Assemblies, they were known in and to the world to be the Subjects of this Lord; and if any (*1 John 2. 19.*) went out from them brake from the communion of the Church,

Church ; it was *because they were not of the m.*
 Thus they did exist in the
 World, *Lights in the midsts* Phil. 2. 15, 16.
of a crooked pervers genera- 1 Tim. 3. 15.
tion holding forth the word
 of Truth, and the very *Pillars of Truth*, on
 which, the Edicts of this Lord and King,
 were so openly fixed, that the whole World
 might run and read them. How shall
 we be known to the believing, or unbelie-
 ving World to be *Subjects* to the King of
 Saints, if we live *out of the visible communi-*
on of Saints ? and Members united to, and
holding Christ the Head ; If we live *disjoyned*
from the body ? how shal a single sheep be judg-
 to belong to him the *Shepherd and Bishop* of
 our souls, if he *follow not the footsteps of the*
flocks ; and cry not unto him, *Tell me, O thou*
whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest ?
where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon ?
 Communion with *Idolaters* must be avoided
 by Christians, because it is a *Profession* of re-
 lation to them, and *subjection unto their gods* :
 Communion with *Christ's true Church* must
 be carefully kept ; because it is a *Profession*
 of Relation, and subjection to him. (*Acts* 5.
 13.) *Nicodemus* his coming to Christ by
 Night is recorded as an Argument of weak
 Faith, and they who feared the *Publick Com-*
munion of the Church, because of Gods ter-
 rible

70 *Light James's Case*
rible detection of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, in a way extraordinary, did shew but *cold affections to the Son of God*; Nor can I see how those men that *pretend to the greatest love to the Lord Jesus*, will, or can approve the verity of such pretences; whilst they Paganize all Chrian; Lay wast the Catholick Visible Church, and refuse, ye deny all *Publick Communion* with it, that they may coop up the name of Christ, to a corner, and enjoy him in *self-constituted Assemblies*, by *self-consecrated Ministers*, if not by *self-invented Ministrations*. Any that are but indifferently read in *Ecclesiastical Story*, under either *Pagan* or *Papal* persecutions, cannot but observe the *profession of Love*, or *hatred to Christ the Mediatour*, was ever militated, and manifested by *cleaving to*, and following after, or *drawing from*, and leaving the communion of the Church Catholick Visible, in the publick Ministrations of his Mediatorship. Have we indeed a Relation and affection to Christ, we must have zeal to *profess the same to*, and in the world; and we cannot profess it, unless we live in communion with his true Church.

This therefore must be our greatest care; for thus we exist *Members of the household of Faith*, and *fellow Citizens with the angels*, Ephes. 2.

2. *Resf.* Such as love Christ must be careful to keep communion with the Church of Christ, that *they may worship, and serve Christ the Lord, with due solemn Publick Worship.*

Every believing Soul hath through Christ a liberty of access to the throne of Grace; and stands bound to worship him as in their Families, so also in their Closets; yea in all places on all occasions; in their most retired, or restrained state, the most secret ejaculations of their souls, must do Homage to their Sovereign Lord: *Hanna* called on the Lord, and spake not; 1 Sam. i. 13. And God challenged *Moses*; with, *why cryest thou unto me?* when no humane ear could hear him speak, Ex. 14. 15. the Spirit of Adoption doth cry *Abba Father* with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered; Rom. 8. 16. but these do not, must not exclude, intercept much less interdict, and restrain the Solemn Worship to him to be given in the Assemblies of his people, and publick communion of his Church, for God is to be revered in the Assemblies of his Saints, Psal. 89. 7. *David*; Soliloquies did not withdraw his Devotion from the Sanctuary; his Harp tuned also many Psalms for the Sabbath day; (Psal. 81. & al.) by which he would

would praise them in the *Assemblee of the*
Congregation of the just ; The Shepheard
 whose care is alike to his flock in *common*, ex-
 pecteth they *all* pass under the *same Rod*,
 and with due devotion to him, *joyntly couch*
 in the Pastures to which he driveth them,
 and feed under his inspection in *joynt Convoca-*
tions, and most *Publick Assemblies*. God in-

Adam, Abel, Cain,
 Enoch, Noah, Abra-
 ham, Jacob.

Ohelmoed Tabernacu-
 lum conventionis, ma-
 gis quam testimonii,
 quod ibi convenirent
 populus ad orandum &
 serviendum deo, *Munf*

deed in the first communi-
 cation of peculiar grace, to
 the sons of *Adam*, was ado-
 red by *Persons*, and *families*,
 yet these were then known
 in and to the world, to be
 the *Worshippers of the true*
God : But so soon as the
family which he had cho-
 sen of all families on earth
 existed a *people*, and Nation among the Na-
 tions of the earth, he fixed among them his
Ohelmoed Tabernacle of Convention, rather
 then Testimony; saith *Munster* at which, as the
symbole of his presence, they who might see
 God in their Tents, were bound to wor-
 ship in *solemn Convocations*, and joynt Assem-
 blies to serve him : And so soon as this pecu-
 liar people arrived to a fixed state, his Temple
 (the Type as of Christ, so of the Christian
 Church) was established the *only place* for the
holy Convocations to be celebrated by the

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Solemn Worship of God, by all *Israel*, that were called *Israel*, as these were to the Jews, so by Analogy are the stated Church Assemblies of Christians, *Engagements of solemn Publick Worship to Christ the Mediator*, as Symbols, of his peculiar Communion with

Cultus publicus debet in diem dominicam haberi in convocatione Ecclesie Christi post & ante meridiem ad illum sanctificandum, & igitur dicitur convocatio sancta. *Amos. Med. lib. 2. cap. 10.*

the sons of men. All Divines though disagreeing about the Sabbath it self, do agree that the Sabbath is to be sanctified by the

holy convocations of Christians, and that the *Cælus fidelium* by solemn Publick Worship, celebrate the name of Christ the Redeemer; an act *Essential to the Sanctification of the Sabbath*, which is therefore in scripture called an *holy Convocation*, unto which Gods

Quod tum universus populus convocaretur soleniter ad cultum Dei, & simul congregaretur & quisquis absens prophanus haberetur. *Vata.*

silver Trumpets summoned all the people, nor might any, without an imputation of prophaneness, absent himself, *Levit. 23. 3. Numb. 10. 10.* Because Solemn publick worship required their presence: In sense hereof the Jews, in their settled state built synagogues, in all their Towns and Cities, to which they did devoutly resort, to the sanctifying the Sabbath by the publick

service of God. The Christian Church was no sooner founded by the Lord our Saviour, (whose Death ended the *Old World*, and his Resurrection gave beginning to the *New*) but they did in solemn Conventions sanctifie *the first day of the Week*, as the Lords day, by the publick and joynt adoration of their dear Redeemer; which day so to be sanctified, hath ever since continued, in the constant, and conscientious *Convocations* of all Christians, in all places, and all Ages of the World; And for the more convenient assembling to such serious, Solemn Service of God, they did in the Apostles days fix certain places; and began betimes in all Lands to build *Oratories* and *Churches*, as I have before observed; which on the increase of the Church, and by the extent of the name, and worship of Christ, were formed into *Parishes*, and called *Parish-Churches*. All that love Christ, must know publick *Worship*, is a duty indispensable, and to be preferred above, and before all *private Devotions*; though God heareth Prayer in all places, yet his name is placed in *Zion*; he is to be sought in the *Assemblies of his Saints*; among them he is known a *God bearing Prayers*; it is a prophane fancy to think God is as well worshipped, and the Sabbath as well

Psalme 86. 26.
1, 2.

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well sanctified by sitting at home, reading the Bible, or other good books, and performing private acts of Devotion to God, as by going to Church, and reverently communicating in the publick Ministrations of Service to, from, and before the Lord; That indeed ought to be done, but the other must not be left undone: The private must give place to the publick; The serious heart cannot but resolve with the Psalmist, *we will enter the Tabernacles of the Lord, and worship at his foot-stool*, Psal. 132. 7. and herein carefully avoid the Congregations of the wicked, false assemblies, the flocks of Christs Companions, which seem indeed to worship, but in truth dishonour, and blaspheme him, least he prophane Gods holy name and day, by a service false for Matter, Manner, or at least the Subject, all which, are equally odious unto God: For as God will not be worshipped by every kind of service; so he is not to be worshipped by every assembly; it is true the Censers & incense were the Lords, but what hath Corah and his company to do to separate from the Congregation of the Lord; and make themselves an holy Convocation: You that make conscience of serving the Lord your Saviour aright; Get up; come away from the Tents of these wicked men, and keep close in Communion with the Catholick Visible Church of Christ, and stated

Assemblies of *Israel*, amongst whom he is and will be served.

3. *Reas.* Such as love *Christ*, must be careful to keep *Communion* with the Church of *Christ*, that they may secure their claim to, and interest in the *Covenant of Grace*, and the *Priviledges thereof*. The enjoyment of *God*, union with *Christ*, pardon of sin, the Spirit of Adoption, Spiritual blessings in Heavenly high places, are in all things chiefest to be desired by the sons of men; and he that secureth not an interest in, a good title to these, is in the height of outward happiness most miserable: These, *God our Saviour* hath purchased for, and published in, and to his Church, and by an *everlasting Covenant* secured them, to the sons of men; but this *Covenant* is not transacted with any single persons; but with the Church, and only with persons as united to, and in communion with the Church: *God* hath never said to *Peter*, or *Paul*, or *Jamer*, or *John*, or any particular soul, *I will be thy God*, and *thou shalt be my people*; but unto his Church he hath said it, and established it by an ever-
 Jer. 31. ing *Covenant* in the hands of a Me-
 32, 33. diator; and all individuals, can
 Heb. only claim interest in, and relation
 10. 11. to *God* by being united to, and in
Communion with the Church. The Apostle
 doth

doth most plainly set out the estate of us Gentiles, whilst out of the Church, *at that time we were without Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, without hope, and without God in the World.* The priviledges of Grace are secured by Charter to Society, and to be claimed as a common right to all the Members, *of that Society; only as Members:* and therefore being brought into union with the Church, we are said to be *no more Strangers, and Forreigners, but fellow-Citizens with the Saints,* and of the household of God: by being joyned to the Church; we are *founded on the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, whereof Christ is the Corner-stone,* and by communion being fitly framed; we grow up, and are built an holy Temple for the living God, Ephes. 2. If we cast off communion with the Church of Christ, we cannot claim any the priviledges promised to the same, and promise made to our own persons, we can find none; the whole Mediatorship of Christ was for his Church and is only Ministerated in, and to his Church: He loved his Church, he gave himself Eph. 5 26. for his Church, he sanctifieth, and cleanseth

Quid horribilius, quid infelicius excogitari possit his malis, talia tamen mala sequebantur illos qui gentes erant, & extra Ecclesiam Zanchio in Eph. 2.

his Church, by the washing of water through the Word; he hath purchased no favour but for his Church; he hath promised no grace but to his Church; his Ministrations are to no men, but to his Church; these indeed have the *word of promise*, to them it is preached, and by Sacraments sealed. None are to God through him a *Royal Priest-hood*, an *holy Nation*, a *peculiar people* but his Church; whosoever will have in themselves any assurance of *Sanctification*, *Pardon of sin*, *power against corruption*, and *temptation*, or any other operation of the Spirit of truth, and holiness, must clear their relation to, and claim in communion with the Church, and claim them as a common right to all the Members of that body; Hence those phrases are commonly and properly used amongst the Antients. *He cannot have God for his*

Non habet Dei patrem,
qui non habet Ecclesi-
am matrem. Cypri. de
unitate Eccles.

Gerhard Loc. Com. de
Eccle. Cap. 4.

Father, who hath not the Church for his Mother, and out of the Church no Salvation: the Vessels of the Tabernacle are brought into the Temple; only members of the Church visible

militant, be received into the Church Triumphant. None out of Noahs Ark can escape the destruction by the Deluge. Nor any out of the Church the wrath of God: The

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Church is Christs Kingdom in the World defended against the power of the World, all out of the Church are the subjects of the Devil, The God of the world: and all out of Rahabs house must perish in the destruction of Jerico. Salvability is only in the Church, as Chemnitius well noteth; these are inseparably joyned together, and concatenated, God, the Word, Spirit, Faith, Church, Salvation, life eternal: and observable is that of Lactantius, The Church is the house of Faith, and Temple of God, into which if any one enter not, and from which if any one go out, he is a stranger to life and eternal salvation. And S. Austin excellently well concludes, by Faith and patience, and the Church our Mother, we hope to receive what God our Father shall vouchsafe to give to his children; therefore, Ob Children love your Mother, forsake not your Mother, daily requiring your Communion. I

Hæc conjuncta sunt & intime connexa; Deus verbum, Spiritus, Ecclesia, salus, vita æterna. Chemnitii in Euchi.

Ecclesia est domicilium fidei, & templum Dei, quod si quis non intraverit, vel a quo si quis exiverit, a spe vitæ & salutis æternæ alienus est. Lactan. Lib. 4. Histi. Cap. 30.

Per fidem, patientiam, & matrem Ecclesiam, speramus accipere, quicquid filiis dignatus est donare; filii boni amate matrem, filii boni, nolite deserere vos quotidie requirentem. Aug. Symbol. ad Catechumen. Cap. 124

Operationis spiritus non sunt participes qui non concurrunt ad Ecclesiam; sed Semetipsos franguntur.

a vita, per sententiam
malam, & operationem
pessimam: ubi enim Ec-
clesia, ibi & Spiritus, &
gratia, veritas; Qua-
propter qui non eam
participant nec, a
mamillis matris nutri-
untur non percipiunt
fontem nitidissimum.
Irenæus lib. 3. cap. 4.

will therefore conclude
this Reason, and its co-
gency to convince it, as
a duty to all that love
Christ, and desire to se-
cure to themselves, their
interest in him, and
the benefit of his Me-
diatorship, with that ex-
cellent expostulation of *Irenæus*. They all
are not partakers of the work of the holy Spi-
rit, who do not run into the Church, but de-
ceive themselves of life by an evil opinion and
worse operation. For where the Church is, there
is the Spirit and all grace and truth; and
they that communicate not with it, and are
not nourished with this Mothers breasts, do
not perceive that clear fountain which flow-
eth out of Christs Body to Life Eter-
nal.

4. *Reas.* The fourth and last Reason, that I
shall urge, to convince all that love Christ, to
be careful to keep communion with the Church is,
that thereby they may escape the dangers which
inevitably attend non-communion: The
Church whilst it is on earth is militant, and
all the Members thereof must fight the good
fight of Faith; and therefore conceiving
themselves obnoxious to danger, have need
to

to watch and and be sober, and daily to pray to Christ *not to lead them into temptation*, much more to take heed they run not themselves into temptation; Do we what we can, danger doth impend us, and will overtake us in our closest guards and and *nearest communion* with the Church: But if by any means, we be *loosed from this Harbour*, we must needs run adrift we know not whether, and dash on Rocks, Sands, and Shelves we know *what*; but such as must needs dash us in pieces; if we can be drawn out of this fort, we cannot but lie open to the outrageous pursuit of a most violent enemy, *Satan* and the *World*; If we are once severed from this flock, we are hunted on every hill, and ready to be devoured by every Wolf. How may we conceive, the souls in our text, were afflicted with the sence of this danger, when they cryed out in such affrightment, *Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?*

I have before observed to you, that want of communion with the Church, exposeth to disorder and confusion, which createth great distraction to the mind, and a danger of destruction to the whole man: Orderly motion in any Society, or body politick, is the preservation and propagation of it. Divide &
impe-

impera is the Politick Maxim of a subtile enemy. The whole body *fitly framed*, *Ephes. 2.* saith the Apostle, by the *orderly coagmentation* and operation of every member *edifieth the whole*. Shall the *orderly combinations* of the Church her enemies, strengthen against her; and her *confusions*, and *disorder*, betray her to their pride, malice, and insultation? God forbid. Let it be our care by close & constant communion, to commend the God of Christians, as the *God of Order in all the Churches of the Sainst*, least disorder in the duties we do, render them unacceptable to God, and ineffectual to our selves and other.

Again, *Non-communication with the Church* doth expose us to the danger of *Seduction*, falling into the fellowship of *Impostors* and *Seducers*, who under the name of Christ, draw souls from him, and pretend to advance him, but indeed overthrow the salvation of many: *Non-communication* in the publick Ministration of the Belly, will soon make all the members of the body feeble, and languish: If the holy Psalmist being but a little absent from Gods House, *his feet do almost slip, and his Faith failing*, he is ready to condemn the generation of the just, *Psal. 73.* The London Presbyters did sometime observe such as forsook our Congregations, and

and brake from Communion with our Churches, *decayed much in the power of godliness, and fell into strong notions of an high nature:* They affirm Non-communication with the true Church, to be that which introduceth all confusions, & doth not only disturb, but doth in a little time destroy the power of godliness, purity of Religion, and Peace of the Church, and sets open a wide gap to to bring in Atheism, Popery, Heresie, and all manner of wickedness: they charge on some yet extant among us; *your first error was in separating from our Churches, from which Christ did not separate, here the Serpent getteth in his head, and no wonder if his whole body follow. They who loose from the Church-communication tumble into the deepest gulf of error;* He that breaks from union with the Church, cannot long hold the unity of the Faith: Man is a sociable creature, and must live in company, and be concerned in some common interest; if they be out of communion with Christs true Church, they naturally fall in to any that profess but *Sanctitie*, and are but called by the Name of Christ. Separation and Non-communication with the Church, saith a Grave Divine, is of dangerous consequence to them who are involved in

Vindication of the Presbyterian Government and Ministry, p. 17, 118, 119, 120.

Brinsley Schimattaigh-ed, &c. p. 22.

it, who by dividing themselves from the body

Sicut amissio charitatis
est, via ad amittendum
fidem, sic etiam Schis-
ma est via ad Hære-
sin. Aquin. 2. 2. qu. 39.
art. 3.

Nullum Schisma quod
non sibi aliquam con-
fingit hæresin, ut recte
ab Ecclesia recessu vi-
deatur. Jer. Com. in
Tit.

are in a dangerous way to
divide from the Head. The
Schoolman doth conclude;
as the loss of charity is the
way to the losing Faith,
So also Schism is the way
to Heresie: St. Jerom ob-
serveth there is no Schism
which doth not ordinari-
ly invent and broach some
Heresie, that so Separation
may be made to seem neces-
sary, and the great casuist (most tender of
any, in the case of Separation) doth con-
clude Schism maketh way to Heresie, and Se-
paration from Christ. The

Schisma viam facit ad
hæresin & Separatio-
nem a Christo.
Anaf. Caf. Com de Schis.
lib. 3. cap. 2.

truth of this is evident
in the Antient Schismatics,
the Novatians, the Do-
natists, and others who
from Schism became the
Authors and Patrons of many Heretical
Opinions, what dreadful Hereses, did the
pernicious Schismatics in New-England run
into? Let the admirers of that way
remember, and deny if they can: But why
run we so far abroad; among our selves, can

we

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we choose but see, what an
hydra of *heresy* hath sprung
from this stock of Non-

Read *Edward's Gran-
grene, and Bayly's dis-
walive from Errors.*

communion, and Schismatick Independency.
Such therefore as study Peace and Order,
and would be delivered from Heresie and
Error, and not be seduced, by and into false
Assemblies of Christians, be careful to keep
communion with Christs true Church; for
here are *Christs Ministers*, holding forth
the Word of Truth, the *the voice of Christ*,
which his Sheep here, and here is the spirit of
Christ *leading into all truth*, and main-
taining the *unity of the Spirit in the bond of*
peace.

CAP.

CAP. V.

*The Application of the Doctrine, by way of
Exhortation to know the true
Church with which we must
hold communion.*

THE Doctrine hath been explained, and proved, you see what we understand by church what is the communion of the Church, what it is to be careful of that communion, and the Reasons which conclude that Care, to be the Duty of all that love Christ, unto the keeping communion, with the Church of Christ; It now remaineth that we improve the Doctrine by Application, making from it some Inferences, that may guide our own practise.

Many are the Inferences, which might be profitably drawn from this Proposition, and especially by way of blame, and reproof to the carelessness of Church Communion, secession from communion, and separation from the Church, which abounds in, and among those who pretend to most affection to the

the Lord, and closest union with the Head ; affecting of all Christians to be accounted most *holy, devout, Religious*, and the *peculiar People of God* : but least in a subject so *unpleasing to the ear*, and *afflicting to the mind* of the guilty (whose consciences, stir on the first suggestions of it ; and are only checked by force and violence ; *resisting the power of the truth and raging into the reproach of the reprover,*) I should seem too Satyrical, I shall wave that Method : and being desirous to heal the hurt of the Lords people as *gently*, but as *faithfully* as I can, I will only improve the Doctrine by way of *Exhortation* and serious *swaſſon* to this indispensable Duty.

Is it so, as certainly so it is.

That *all who love Christ must be careful to hold Communion with the Church of Christ* : Let us then be exhorted unto this double Duty.

1. Be we careful to *know which is the true Church of Christ*, with which we are to hold communion.

2. Be we careful to *cleave to the communion of Christs true Church* being once known.

Gerherd (in his common places,) having discoursed at large concerning the Church, and

and entring on the *tokens*, or Characters by

Cardo salutis in eo ver-
titur, ut veram Eccle-
siam cognoscamus: ei-
demq; cognitz nos ad-
jungamus, & postquam
nos ei adjunxerimus,
in ea perseveremus.

Gerh. Loc. Com. Tom. 5.
de Eccl. cap. 10.

which the Church may be
known premiseth this con-
clusion; *the very hinge of*
salvation, doth turn on
these two Hooks,
that we *know the true*
Church; and *adjoyn our*
selves to it known; *perse-*
vering in the communion of

it when we are once adjointed to it. Nor can I
see how our Doctrine of the Church, and the
communion with it can be better improved;
then by perswading the same two Duties, to
know the Church, to *cleave to the Church*
known.

First therefore: Let all that love Christ,
make it their care to *know the true Church* of
Christ: where it is, which it is, to which they
must be *joyned in communion*, with which they
may with confidence expect the influence of
Divine Grace, and Favour. This we find
was the great care of the sons of Zion, in our
Text, the Ground, Chief, and only Matter
of their Prayer; the one thing concerning
which they would be resolved, and in
which they intreat guidance and direction:
Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth? where
thou feedest thy flocks? where thou makest
them to rest at noon? Among the many As-
semblies

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semblies which *bear thy name*, and aspire to be called *thine*, let me, *help me to know* with certainty, infallibly, which is thy Flock, thy *only flock*, under thine immediate pastoral inspection, enjoying communion with themselves, and so communion with thee, and communication of thy divine grace and favour.

Knowledge is the guide and ruler of the affection; objects are desired, imbraced, and pursued according as they are known and apprehended: the mistake of the mind, in reference to any object, will *misguide* the affection, and *miscarry* the action of the whole man; whilst *Pharaoh* knew not the *God of Israel*, he disobeyed him, and not knowing the *Israel of God*, he oppressed them and slighted them, *whose first-borns* were saved in a night of common destruction. When in *Israel* there arose a generation which *Judges 2. 10.* *knew not God*; they departed from him: And when there arose a generation which *knew not the Temple of the Lord at Jerusalem*, to be the place for the most solemn convocations of *Israel*; they would freely wander to *Dan* and *Bethel*: they who are in nature *sociable*, by the byass of a religious

Cultum notitia Dei
præcedit: colit qui no-
vit, qui non novit, non
colit: Sen. Epist. 96.

gious affection, must needs run to the false
assemblies of Christians,
the flocks of Christs Com-
panions; if they know
 not with certainty the
true Church of Christ, where he feedeth his
flocks, where he maketh them to rest at
 noon.

The knowledge of Christs true Church,
 is unto all believing souls of *absolute necessity,*
 and *indispensable duty:* Communion must
 not be held with Religious Assemblies, at
hazard; he that falls into the fellowship
 of Christians by chance, may chance to fall
 out of *divine favour,* whilst he happens to
 hold communion with such as are called by
 the Name of Christ, but have not his Nature
 nor presence, nor union with him; they may
 trifle in the worship of the Mediator, *pro-*
phane his name, and Tantalize themselves
 with the priviledges of Grace, which they
 have no ground to claim, nor capacity to
 enjoy: to mistake the subject will miscarry
 the whole of the ministrations of the Me-
 diator. The cry of *holiness and Censers of*
the Lord, will not make Corah and his com-
 pany offer up sweet Incense, acceptable to
 the Lord, nor secure them from destruction
 for *separating from the body of Israel.* Nor can
 Abaziah think, that the *burnt Offerings and*
Sacrifices

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sanctified offered by ~~the~~ the Priest of the Lord, can be acceptable, and procure an answer of peace, whilst offered on the Altar of his own appointment: The God of Israel must be sought and enjoyed in his Temple, and Christ the Mediator in the assemblies of his people, truly constituted Churches; for their fellowship is indeed with the Father and the Son, with whom no fellowship can be enjoyed, but in communion with them: the Devil transformed into an Angel of light, and false Apostles, being even as the Ministers of Christ, do but beguile Christians, from the simplicity of the ministrations of Christ, and many may in their subsistence from the Church, call themselves Jews; who will be found to be the Synagogues of Satan: the profession of false Churches, as to their relation to God, and interest in his Covenant, is a blasphemy to be abhorred by men, and avenged by the Lord: and therefore all that love Christ, must know it to be their duty, to ascertain to themselves Christ's true Church: to know infallibly, with whom to hold communion: not to be deceived in the subjects of divine favour, and communications, not to mistake the place, Society, flock, where, ~~with whom~~ Christ maketh his, to rest at noon, in an hour of affliction and temptation.

So to know Christ's true Church may sometimes

times be an act of *difficulty*, against which conscience of *duty*, can only oppose *diligence*; many times, many clouds obscure and darken the Church of Christ; sometimes the *violence of persecution*, when God suffereth *Moab*, *Ammon*, the enemies of *Zion*, and *Edom* to insult over her, and almost to root out the name of *Israel*, that it be no more remembered: to captivate his Church, and confine it to a corner; sometimes by the *disorder of ministrations*, and *prophaneness of Ministers*, as in the dayes of *Eli*, when the people of the Lord began to loath the *sacrifices of the Lord*, and unwarrantably to leave the *Tabernacles of God*: Sometimes by the general defections of *Israel*, turning aside to false gods, and enforcing the same by violence, as in the dayes of *Elias*, when Gods whole Church was reduced to *seven thousand*, which bowed not the knee to *Baal*, and they obscured, by reason of the persecution, in *dens and caves*, that the Prophet could not find them, but concluded, *I am left alone, and they seek my life also to take it away*. But principally by false *Assemblies*, and pretended *Flocks of Christ's Companions*; Satan well knows *Corrivals* are a great check on humane affections; Parity of ob-

jects

jects confounds humane choice; the Chil-
 dren of light, who have their eyes dazzled
 with false glories; the gods of the world la-
 boureth to darken the
 glorious light of the Gos- 2 Cor. 4.
 pel, least it shine into the
 hearts of men, and save
 them; nor doth he ever
 do it more successfully,
 than by setting up false
 lights (flat darkneses) in
 competition with it: and
 knowing the Church is
 the pillar of truth, on which the Decrees of
 Heaven are fixed; and that she is charged
 with the Oracles of God; and in it they are
 published; he therefore laboureth to obscure
 and darken the true Church, by false Assem-
 blies pretending the same relation to, and
 adoration of Christ the Mediator: Corah's
 gathered Congregation, self-constituted
 Church, with a cry of common holiness to the
 Land, could easily deceive the simple, yea,
 dazle the eyes, and draw away many of the
 Princes of Israel, famous
 in the Congregation, men of Numb. 6. 16
 renown: Jeroboam's Calves
 at Dan, and Bethel, perplexed the God-fear-
 ing Israelites, putting them to a stand, whe-
 ther to go to Jerusalem, or to Dan, or Bethel.

The Temple in Mount Gerizim constrained
that distracting doubt to the Woman of Sam-
aria; when convinced our Saviour was

able to resolve it; *Whither*
John 4. 20. *must we worship in this*

Mountain or in Jerusalem?

Iosephi Antiquitat. lib. 2. cap. 10. p. 1004. ubi se vult
has to ascribe vol. b. ubi
so bene testatur. ubi

Hence this grand impos-
ter, hath ever opposed

God's Church, by putting

others under the same aspect in competition

with them; Gods true Prophets never call-
ed under the Law, but the false prophets did

immediately arise to undermine their mission

for the true Messiah was no sooner exhib-
ited to the world, but false Christs also ap-
peared, whose Churches cried out, *Lo here is*

Christ, lo there is Christ, to the danger of de-
ceiving; if possible, *the very Eldest* nor is

Christ sooner ascended into Heaven, than the

Ministers of Satan appear even as the *Minis-*
ters of Christ, drawing Disciples after them,

Christ never had his Church where the Devil

hath not presently had

his Chappel. The Church
of Smyrna and Philadelphia

(whose counten-
part our Brightman too
curiously hath made
Scotland) of all the Churches of Asia the
most glorious; and those, on whom our Sa-
viour

Brightmanus Scholia
in Apocalypcos, cap:
3.

your charge and defect; yet were disturb-
 ed by the Synagogue of Satan, which was
 among them, calling themselves Jews, but
 were not. How did the false assemblies of
 Christians, woe to the *Nicene*, *Catharists* and
Donatists Schisms, disturb and darken the
 true Church of Christ in the primitive times?
 And what a cloud did the *Anabaptists*
 Schism in Germany bring upon the
 first reformation? The work which is
 of the Church by *Luther*, ^{now to do in the}
 and the *Brownists*, and ^{Churches of England,}
Independents in England, ^{is not to make Churches}
 on the latter end, ^{where there were}
 for the perfection of the ^{none before, but to}
 reformed reformation, ^{reduce them to their}
 the Church; whilst by ^{first primitive instituti-}
 erecting new Churches, they deny the very
 existence of the true Church, whose only
 reformation now, and is the business of our
 generation, to be pursued in close and due
 communion with it. ^{God has, and will, and is}
 This difficulty to discern the true Church,
 must not deter or discourage any from a due
 inquiry, and discovery of an object so neces-
 sary, of such indispensable duty; but must
 rather quicken diligence in the due conside-
 ration of such *Chr. affs.*, which may make
 uncertain and infallible to the mind: which
 I shall now lay before you two ways.

164 *Negatively, Noting those supposed Characters, by which some too easily and rashly conclude the existence of the Church.*

Positively, Noting those Characters, which will certainly conclude, and shew, which is the true Church of Christ, with which we are bound to hold communion.

That we may the better know which is Christs true Church; I shall first note negatively those marks which some men (to the deceiving themselves and others) do suppose to be the marks of a Church of Christ;

but indeed are not marks of a Church; at least, not

true, only and alwayes agreeing to the Church, as essential to it, not

separable; whereby it may be ascertained to the soul which seeks communion with it;

And passing by those fifteen marks of the Church, which are disputed between Bellar-

mine and the Protestant Divines, as not proper for our state, and those which have been

fully discussed, and judiciously determined, as no constant certain marks of the Church:

I shall only consider such, as some among our

selves are apt to urge, for the acquitting

themselves from the imputation of *Schism*,

concluding thereupon, though they have

separated from some Societies of Christians,

they continue in Church-communion; when

indeed

indeed they do not; but in *self-constituted* conventions, contradicting to the Church; with whom, they are bound to hold communion, in order to their salvation; and they are such as these.

1. *Number and Assembly* is not a mark of a true Church: Schism, though it be small, and in its first appearance, arise with a few, like a fruit of the flesh, it soon grows great, and obtaineth many subjects, and when it can but appear in a troop, and exist in an open Assembly, and numerous Congregation, it scorneth any longer to be called Schism: the Subjects of it can march cheek with the Church from which they have separated; and boldly say, we hold open, and publick communion, and are as full a Society, as you, a Church visible and publick, as well as you; and therefore not to be charged with Schism.

This mark of the Church is borrowed from the *Papists*; and hath been by all Protestant Divines detected as not essential, proper, agreeing alwayes, and only to the Church; and therefore cannot make the mark of a true Church:

False mark of a Church of Christ.

Gerhard Loc. com. de Eccles. Cap. 10. sect. 1. Defence of the Apology of the Church of England, p. 100, 101, 102.

the

the world abounds with the Assemblies of
 men, and the Congregations of the wicked;
 these (as we have before noted) accord-
 ing to the *multitudo Ecclesie* and large Signification of
 the word *Ecclesia*, may be
 called a Church; but they
 are not a Church of Christ,
 men as men are not the
 matter of Christs Church;
 but men as called into
 Christs Mediatorship, and
 duly subjected to the
 ministrations of his Mediatorship; all Assem-
 blies of men are not called to Christs Med-
 iatorship; the numerous Turks blaspheme, the
 Heathen deny and disown him, a number and
 multitude may, and doth oft attend those
 who withdraw from that subjection; they
 ought to yield to the ministrations of his
 Mediatorship. Gods Church began in a few,
 and is many times by the defection of many,
 and through the violence of persecution re-
 duced to a few: Adam's, Noah's, Abraham's
 family, were Gods Church; the Jewish Ob-
 edience in its largest extent, small, in compar-
 ison of the Gentiles. The same reduced to
 a few thousand (in the dayes of Elias) was
 Gods only Church. The Christian Church
 began in a few Disciples, and was many times
 reduced

governments of any Republick in the world; to spend their time in *Soliloquies*, *Trances*, *Enthusiastick motions*, and the wild discourses of men void of Reason, much more of Religion; yea, and that without distinction of Sex, or the least aspect of order; yet how many would have these accounted a Church? pleaded for as a Church, and the dispersion of them by the Magistrate iudged the persecution of the Church of Christ? Christians, be not deceived, if there be an error in the foundation, and you have unwarrantably separated from the communion of Christ's Church, it is not the number and multitude of a contrary Assembly, can make you exist the Church of Christ; it is a plea ridiculous, light and vain, *Our Assemblies are Churches*, for we have a great Congregation and meet openly.

Second false note of a Church.

Every Assembly of Christians will not make a Church: the Church of Christ is an Assembly of Christians; but not every Assembly of Christians; but only an Assembly of Christians come together, in a due subjection to the ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship: The same men may make a Church, and civil society; and may assemble in these different capacities, in different times, and places.

When

for Church-Communion. 169

When Christians are assembled in a *civil capacity* (which their Christianity doth not destroy) as in Colledges, in the Courts of Judicature, or the grand Councils of a Christian Nation; they are not a Church, because an Assembly of Christians; for in these Conventions they may consult, debate, conclude, and agitate some things concerning the Church, but they do not enjoy *Word and Sacraments*, nor come together so to do; nor assemble religiously to worship the Mediator, and testify their relation to him, and one to another in due subjection to him; which is the only form of a Church of Christ.

The Church (with Third false note of a Church. which we must hold communion) is not an Assembly of *real Saints*, true Believers, and Souls sincerely united unto Christ the Head; these make the matter of the Church *invisible*, and lie out of the infallible discovery of men, the Lord only knoweth who are his, in truth and sincerity: *Professed subjection* to Christ, and his Ordinances, which is *obvious to all men*, is the only guide of men unto the Church, with which we must hold communion: Christ's Church visible is the Field in which grows

Gregori. Rom. 11. in Evan.

Tares,

as *Christ* is *of* *both* *Testaments*, as *well* as *Wheat* & *Chaff* *is* *of* *both* *Testaments*. The *Wheat* which includes *the* *good* and *bad*: The *Wheat* is *of* *both* *Testaments* *as* *well* as *Chaff* *is* *of* *both* *Testaments*. All which *is* *of* *both* *Testaments* *is* *of* *both* *Testaments*. *Similitudes* *the* *Antients* *have* *improved* *against* *the* *Novatians* *of* *old* *to* *the* *convincing* *that* *true* *Grace*, *real* *Sanctity*, *sincere* *Faith*, and *those* *external* *qualifications* *which* *the* *Schismatics* *of* *those* *times* *did* *make* *the* *mark* *of* *the* *Church* *of* *God*, *were* *not* *so*, *as* *we* *have* *before* *noted*. The *Church* *is* *a* *company* *of* *men* *called* *to* *Christ*, *and* *subjected* *to* *the* *ministrations* *of* *his* *Mediatorship*, *which* *is* *true* *and* *sincere* *in* *some*, *ought* *to* *be* *so* *in* *all*, *but* *yet* *in* *some* *is* *only* *in* *profession* *and* *symbolical*: Thus *it* *hath* *been* *in* *all* *ages* *of* *the* *world* *under* *old* *or* *new* *Testament*, *and* *in* *all* *the* *Churches* *in* *the* *world*, *that* *were* *ever* *called* *by* *the* *name* *of* *Christ*. The *Ministers* *of* *the* *Church* *must* *be* *guided* *in* *their* *ministrations*, *and* *applicati-* *on* *of* *the* *Seals* *of* *the* *Covenant*, *and* *Privileges* *of* *the* *Church*; *and* *the* *Members* *must* *as* *to* *their* *communion* *be* *guided*, *by* *qualifications* *within* *themselves*, *and* *where* *of* *they* *can* *pronounce*, *and* *give* *judgment*, *but* *of* *the* *truth* *of* *grace*, *sincerity* *of* *heart*, *real* *sanctity*, *they* *cannot* *pronounce*; *the* *judgment*

for Church Communion. and

judgment of this, is pe-
culiar to the Lord, who
searcheth the heart; and
tryeth the reins; If Mi-
nisters must not baptize,
and minister the Lords
supper till they can know
they do it to true Be-
lievers; and Saints really in union with Christ,
they must never do it; and if we cannot
hold communion with a Church without this
character, we must go to Heaven without
Church communion. *Musculus* tells us of
a *Swekfeldian* at *Angsta*, of whom he ask-
ed when he received the Lords Supper
Communion: he answered *Musculus* in a Ger-
man, Not in twelve years. The Lord God
then pass; and being ask-
ed the Reason of such his non-communication;
he answered, He could not find a Church
which was inwardly and outwardly adorned
fit for a Spouse of Christ, and he would suf-
fer till he could find such a one; and so
he never lived in Church communion all
his time after. This man was monstrous in
his Age, because not many of that time
could be brought to his Opinion: But our
monstrous Age hath brought them forth in
abundance; How have the Independent
contested in their Debates, that real Saints,

*Interna sanctitas non
suffragatur vera sed
interna reformatione
non potest esse
conspicui; quoniam
non potest esse
Ecclesie nota.*

*Ger. La. Co. de Eccl.
cap. 10.*

true

Wm. Apollonius,
 Spoken. Hellingworth
 and Bylie arguing
 against them, or enu-
 merating their te-
 stimo-

true Believers, and the
 like, is the only matter of
 the Church: The An-
 baptists with boldness
 persist in it; and a gene-
 ration of Seekers are to

be found among us, who professedly seek a
 Church by this *Mark*, and *Character*, which
 they are never like to find on this side the
 Grave: But whatsoever fancies they have of
 their union with Christ, the Head, they must
 live and die out of all communion with the
 Body; Rome, Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus, nor
 any others were ever known by it; nor can
 we now expect it, for many are called, but
 few are chosen, and these few only known to
 God. The Church with which we must
 hold communion is *visible*, the matter of it
 is *Saints visible*, within the view of *humane*
judgment, which is to be exercised with the
 greatest latitude of *charity*, covering a mul-
 titude of sins. So long as we see men *duly*
submitting themselves, to the *due ministrati-*
ons of the Mediator Christ our Lord, though
 overtaken with *drunkenness*, as Noah, *adul-*
tery, as David, many *defects*, and *disorders*,
 as were the *Corinthians*, and other Primitive
 Churches, which may excite reproof, and
 suspicion of *hypocrisy*, and expose to Church
 censures (not the least act, and advantage
 of

of Church-communion) of such who ought to be cast out of the fellowship of Gods People; we must know we have the mark of a *Church*, with which we must hold communion.

Every Assembly of *visible Saints*, professing *holiness*, holding the *Faith* of the *Catholick Church*, and convening to worship God with *Word and Sacraments*, as the *Ministrations* of the *Mediator* Christ our Lord, will not alwayes exist a *true Church*, with which we are to hold communion. Although *Heresie*, and *Schism*, are ordinarily concomitant, or consequent, one attending, or ensuing upon the other, as cause and effect; yet these are not *confounded*, and *convertible*, so as that the *one*, should be the *other*, without any distinct existency of it self: There is no error in *Doctrine* pertinaciously held, but coming once to be publickly professed, it breaketh out into the most grievous *Schism*; as did *Arrianism*, to the rending the whole *Catholick Church*, and confounding the whole *World*. Nor is any *Schism* of any long standing, and grown to any capacity of publick profession; which doth not ingender some *Heresie*,
I and

4. False note of a Church.

and error in Doctrine, by which to shelter it self from the imputation and charge of

Schismaticus potest esse qui non est hæreticus; ut si quis credens omnes articulos fidei nolit tamen cum Ecclesia vera communicare in actionibus piis; hoc innuitur ab Apostolo, Gal. 5. 20.

Ames. Cas. Con. lib. 50. cap. 12.

that odious sin of *Schism*, as did the *Novatians* and *Donatists*, as is before noted: Yet all Divines have ever agreed he may be a *Schismatick*, who is no *Heretick*; this is confess'd by the great *Casuist*, most tender in the case of *Schism*, who

tells us, the *Apostle to the Galatians* numbring among the fruits of the flesh, *Seditions, Heresies*, intimateth to us this distinction, which I am sure hath ever been retained in the Church of God; who have ever apprehended *Schism*, violating union, assaulting charity, disturbing the peace of the Church, and breaking off from the communion of the Body of Christ, to be a most grievous evil, and horrid sin, not to be excused, nor extenuated by soundness in Doctrine, and union in the catholick Faith. It is worth our observation, that all our Protestant Divines

Gerhard de Ecclesia; cap. 5. sect. 3.

debating against the Papists, whether *Schismatics*, which break off from the communion of the

for Church-Communion. 115

the Church, do any way abide Members of the Church? do rather make an Apology for the Protestant non-communication with the Church of Rome, and vindicate the same as no Schism, then any way demonstrate the Schismatick to continue his relation to

the Church; which he renounceth, and breaketh off, by the very act of Schism; and our grave Casuist doth resolve, that whatever relation they

Ecclesia quæ est Schismatica, fidem retinens, tamen non est habenda pro Ecclesia legitima & approbata; sed vitari debet. Ansf.

may retain invisibly, with the Catholick Church, yet the Assembly of Schismatics, though retaining the true Faith and Sacraments, is not to be held a lawful Church, to be approved, a Church with whom we may hold communion; but they are to be declined and avoided. What serious Christian will say, that Corah's company was a true Church? We all know communion with them cost very dear; yet they professed holiness, retained the knowledge of the true God, and came before him with the Censers, and Incense of the Lords appointment; the formality of their sin, was Schism, sinful separation from the order and communion of the Congregation of Israel, and constituting themselves a Church unto God;

contradistinct to the Church of God: I wish such as gather Churches out of Churches, and by the ministration of *Church-Ordinances*, in counter-Assemblies, setting up

Cum instituitur Ecclesia, hoc est, cum conlocatio quædam quæ legibus Ecclesiasticis, & Dei verbo, & Sacramentorum administratione utitur separatur; quod quædam formula desumpta ex Scriptura, dicitur Struere Altare adversus Altare hoc est quo Schisma Antonomastice *per* *ex* dicitur.

Cam. de Schif. p. 402.

Contradictione Coræ peribunt quicunque seditiones in Ecclesia movent, & Schismata fuscitant; et pacem non diligunt.

Per. in Loc.

Church against Church (which the learned *Cameron* observeth to be the most full and formal act of *Schism*;) that which the Ancients judged the building an *Altar* against the *Altar* of the Lord, as did *Abaziah* (on which he offered the very Offerings, the Morning and Evening Sacrifices of the Lord) would seriously consider, the *Holy Ghost* hath not in vain represented some under the Gospel to perish in the gain-saying of *Corah*. Christians, in your enquiries concerning Christs Church, be not deceived with this mark, and misguided by this character, the Word of Truth is preached; and Sacraments ministered in this, or that Society; this may be, yet their *Schism* will not allow them a Church,

for Church-Communion. 17

Church, with whom we must hold communion.

The presence and ministration of a lawful Minister, will not make a true Church, or be the mark of such an one, with which we may hold communion: for a Minister may preach the Gospel to *infidels*, in order to the increase of the Church, may converse with them, yet his converse, and ministration from Christ, and the Church towards them, and for the bringing them into the Church, doth not make them immediately exist a Church of Christ: *Paulon Mars-hill at Athens* might advantage the Church, but the Assembly there was not a Church of Christ, only because *he was among them, and preached to them*. Again, the Minister is a fallible man, and may be involved in, if not the *Author, Inventer, and Fomenter of Schism*; yet he may become an abettor, and supporter of it, and sinfully maintain it by ministering the things of the Mediator in a *wrong subject, and society*: I must needs grant, *Uriah the Priest* was not the Inventor of the *Altar* conform to that at *Damascus*, but had the pattern from the King *Ahaziah*, he began that *Schism*, and

Fifth false note of a Church.

caused the Altar of the Lord to be forsaken : nor can, I suppose, any serious man will say, the Assembly worshipping at this Altar, was the Church of God, because *Uriah* the Priest did thereupon present the Offerings of the Lord : The Assembly of the Christianized Jews, who contemned the Christian Gentiles at *Galatia*, made a Schism from them, and forsook their communion, would not be justified to be a Church of God by the presence of *Peter*, who also separated with them, and drew *Barnabas* into the same Schism, by his sad example ; so far was the Apostles presence from giving being to that Church, in which he thus sinfully was present, that *Paul* withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed : nor was this Apostle, in zeal to the unity of the Church, afraid to wish concerning these very men (the fear of whom had so surprised *Peter*) *I would they were even cut off that trouble you*, Gal. 5. 12. this was far from holding communion with them. Schismes, I confess, commonly are fomented by men presumptuously assuming the Ministry, yet ordinarily it is begun by a lawful Minister. Self-constituted Churches seldom go without self-consecrated Priests ; *Corah* was a Levite, though *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, his Colleagues

in

for Church-Communion. 119

in Schism; were not. The first Authors of the *Novatian* and *Donatists Schism* were lawful Ministers, yet their ministration would not make their Assemblies the Church, with which Christians might hold communion. The Ringleaders of the *Brownists*, and first Authors of separation from the Church of England, were Ministers truly ordained, as Bolton, Brown and others: I wish we had not cause with grief to remember they were Ministers, who first fomented the gathering of Churches in England, Paganizing the whole Church, not of England only, but all other Countries also, judging them out of the Covenant of God; and carried this Schism unto an open ostentation of an hundred and twenty gathered Churches convened in their Synod at Savoy, October 12. 1658. and exhibiting their Confession of Faith, and institution of Churches, as if living amongst Aliens to the Commonwealth of Israel, to be by them Apostolically formed into Churches of Christ. We well know these self-constituted Churches, soon taught their Leaders to veil their Ministry, and to prostitute it to the pleasure of the people; who

The five Apologists, vid.

Baylies Dissuasive from errors, p. 104, 105, 106. And Edwards his Gangrene.

at their own wills have laid their hands on their own heads, and presumed to minister before the Lord, and boldly defend their so doing; yet they were Doctor Owen's Ministers who began the Schism. groundless Schism, which they were never able to

justify, but have many wayes clouded: *The presence of a Minister* is not alwayes, nor only consonant, and essential to a Church, and therefore Christians be not deceived, and think not to justify your communion with false Churches, unlawful Assemblies by this plea, *The Ministers we hear are lawful, and ordained Ministers*; this may be, and the Assembly or Society of Schismatics.

Sixth false note of a Church.

Conversion and edification of Souls is not the note and character of a true Church. *Conversion* doth not attend every Ministers preaching; *Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God must give the increase*: Some of Christs Ministers in their ministration, find their ministry a *savour of death unto death*; yet a *sweet savour* in the nostrils of their Lord and Master: God sends sometimes *line upon line, precept upon*

for Church-Communion.

upon precept, and hardens peoples hearts, that in hearing they may hear and not understand, and in seeing they may see and not perceive. Although Paul could challenge the Corinthians to be the Seal of his Apostleship, yet we well know, that many good men have complained, they have laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought; if we must not own a Minister of Christ till he convert souls, we shall be at a loss to find a lawful Minister: And this doth not agree only to the Church; the Ministry is given to the Church; but it operates out of the Church, unto the bringing souls into the Church: Conversion and edification is the end of the Ministry of the Church; but not of that. Prov. 15. 7. only; The lips of the wise teach wisdom; and the Dan. 12. 3. just turn many to righteousness. The Disciples dispersed by persecution, preached in common Colloquies the Gospel of Christ, and it prospered; we told you before, that the Iberians were converted by a captive Woman, and the Indians by the Discourses of Edephus and Frumentius, private men. Such is the clearness of Truth, power of the Word of Faith, and pleasure of an all Sovereign-God, that he many times gives

gives light, by any man, that any wayes exhibits it to men: if therefore you find men turned from prophaneness, and increased in knowledge, glorifie the *power of the Word of Truth*; but know this is no warrant for *communion* in the Society where this is effected; this no certain *mark* by which to determine the *true Church of Christ*: and beware your conversions in this case be not *false*, and in appearance only, stopping some careers of prophaneness, but not *turning unto the Mediator* in truth and sincerity; *Aristotle's Lectures on Sobriety*, turned *Alexander the great* from his *drunkenness*, yet the one was not a Minister of Christ, nor the other a Member of the Church of Christ: *True Grace*, in obedience to *Christ's Word*, works into communion with *Christ's true Church*, and abhors every *false way*.

Seventh false note of a Church.

Miracles, and the *immediate Spirit of Prophecy*, is not the mark of the *true Church*; they that challenge this, as the mark of the Church, seem to have borrowed their demand from the Papists, and to be well prepared to go to them for resolution. But let us know, *Miracles* were ever

ever exhibited to confirm Doctrine, its verity, and authority, but never Church-entity or existence: they have been ordinarily wrought in the Church, but not only;

sometime among the Enemies of the Church, they were exhibited to am men to the reception of Truths delivered, and attract obedience, to the Message immediately brought from God: To this end Moses wrought Miracles before Pharaoh, and our Saviour required credence to the Works he wrought; but never as Arguments of the truth of the Church: Moreover they were extraordinary, and on special occasions; not commonly exhibited, and for a time only; where, and when, things were in an ordinary way demonstrable to humane faith. God allowed not a Prophet, nor would he work a Miracle; what the Priests could in their common Ministrations resolve; the Prophet would not so much prophane immediate Inspiration as to do it, Haggai 2. 11. but appeals to the Priest, the Inter-

Miracula ad Doctrinam non Ecclesiam referantur, proprie illius non hujus nota dicenda est.

Trelea. Institut. lib. 2. p. 279.

Qui miracula iam satis multa & clara ediderat, ante ipsorum oculos, & quæ ad doctrinæ confirmationem valebant prave genti signum recusat, Col. in Loc.

preter

preter of the Law : And when the obstinacy of the Jews set against all rational de-

Deus signa indul-
sit cum intererat Ecclesie
salutis, hic negat quia
videt esse nationem
pravam & adulteram.
Par.

monstration which might

and would convince
them, that *Christ was the*
true Messiah, and pre-
sumptuously demand a

Sign, the Lord, who daily

wrought *Miracles* before the weak, would

not with a *Miracle* gratifie the proud de-
mands of the wilful, *Matth. 12. 38, 39.*

Whilst the glorious things of the Gospel
would not by *moral smasion*, and *Discourse* be

received by the weak capacity of men, in
the Infant state of the Church; God did

confirm the same by *Miracles*; but since
they were rationally demonstrable, and

conviction could be effected by discourse.
Miracles, and the *immediate Spirit of Pro-*

phesie, have ceased in, and to the Church,
which yet abides, and must abide, until

Christ give up the Kingdom unto his Father.

Moreover the *Mira* wrought by the
power of Satan, are so like the *Miracula*

wrought by the Finger of God, and so com-
mon to false Assemblies, especially those

which belong to the man of Sin, who works
with all *Power, Signs, and Wonders*, and de-

ceivableness, in them that perish, *2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.*
that

that *Miracles* cannot be proper to the Church alone, and therefore no mark thereof: Let us not tempt God, but know that his *Church* *existeth*; and his Truth is therein exhibited plainly, to the faith, and mind of man, without either *Miracle* or *Propheſie*: Such as profeſs themſelves ſeekers of Chriſts Church by this mark, and note of a Church, may ſeek till Dooms-day, ere they find it, unleſs they will go over to *Rome*, and judge their *lying Wonders* to be *Miracles*, and the marks of a true Church.

Holineſs of life, and practice is not the mark and token of the true

Eighth falſe note of a Church.

Church of God; the holineſs of the heart is only known to God, and cannot be known by men, as is before obſerved; but *outward Sanctity* (which is the duty of all Members of the Church, and the ornament of the Truth and its Profeſſors) is that which ſome make the *only Character of a Church*: How many men are captivated with that cry, *All the Lords people are holy*, and answer all *Objections*, all *convictions* of error, all *reproofs* with that only plea, Oh they are *holy men*, ſpeak not againſt them they are *holy men*. Let me adviſe ſuch to conſider,

Chriſt

Christ himself hath told us, that ravening Wolves come to devour the Flock, but they

Propter munditiem odioso isto nomine Catharistæ sese appellabant.

Aug. de Heresibus cap. 38.

Pelagiani sanctitatem a Deo professi fuerint, ut per sententiam justitiam & morum sanctitate multos deciperent & bona cœlestia audacter vendicarent.

Hieron. Tom. 2. lib. 3. adv. Pelag.

come in *Sheeps clothing*; and the *Apostle* tells us, Hereticks *Speak lyes in hypocrisie*, 1 Tim. 4. 2. that the Devil *transforms himself into an Angel of light*, and his *Ministers* are even as the *Ministers of Christ*, 2 Cor. 11. 12. and Ecclesiastical Story tells us of the very great holiness in the common conversation of the *Novatians, Donatists, Cha-*

tharists, and Pelagians, whereby they procured such a number of *Profelytes* which followed them; *holiness* is the cloak of *Schism*, and *Heresie*, by which the Authors of it win credit to their course and errors. The *true Church* is many times overrun with *prophaneness, rudeness and disorder*, in the practice of its Members; but it is not therefore to be *disowned*; and it is an *ill cure* to heal it, by *running away* from it, and with a cry of *holiness*, to erect and foment *Schism*: The Trumpet of *Corah* cannot be the Token of the true Church of God.

Holiness

for Church-Communion. 227

Holiness is to be honoured; *holy men* esteemed; but holiness of conversation being not *alwayes* in the Church, nor *only* in the Church, it cannot be the *mark* of the Church; nor must we follow an Assembly on this *only* or *chief* ground, because their *common practice is holy*.

You see, Christians, what some pretend to be the *marks* of the true Church of Christ; but indeed *they are not*, but are *false tokens*, by which (if we take not heed) we may be *deceived*, and drawn to *turn aside* by the Flocks of Christs Companions: But that you may not fluctuate on the waves of *uncertainty*, and in a day of *disorder*, *distraction*, and *division*, lye on the rack of *doubting*, not certainly determined, *which is the Church*, unto which you being *joynted*, you must with it *continue* in close communion; we shall positively present you with the *certain and infallible marks* of Christs true Church, by which you may be convinced which is *the Church*, to which you must resort, and with which you may most *cheerfully*, under all discouragements, and most *constantly* against all temptations, *hold communion*: and herein we cannot have a better direction, then the answer of
our

our Saviour unto the enquiry made in the Text, which is given in the very next verse.

If thou know not (Oh thou fairest among Women) go thy way forth by the footsteps of the Flocks, and feed thy Kids besides the Shepherds Tents.

Our Spouse and Lord moved with compassion, to see the Church at so great a loss, where to lodge her wandering sheep, continuing the Metaphor begun of a *Shepherds care towards his Sheep*, gives this answer to her Prayer; *It is much, any distraction, and disorder should make thee doubt of my true Church; but if thou dost not know, observe the Flocks, and their footsteps, the Shepherds and their Tents.*

Divines have generally determined two Notes of the true Church, (viz.) the true preaching of the Word, and the true administration of the Sacraments: I cannot dissent from these two as true and full Characters of the Church: only observe these

*Persistit sponsus in-
cepta similitudine ex
ante Pastoritia sumpta.
Mercer.*

two, being opposed by the Ancients unto heresie, and by the reformed Churches unto the Papacy, or defections of the Church of Rome, they are more generally stated, than the present state of our case will well allow, much, and the same which we shall say is implied in them; but the case under consideration, and the present state of our affairs, require an amplification, and more particular assignment of the true and infallible Notes of the Church, to distinguish from schismatical, as well as heretical Societies; and in this keeping to the answer of the Lord, unto the Prayer of his People, we must extend the two common Generals, into some distinct particular Characters, or Notes of the true Church; and those in the Allegorical language of our Text are these:

1. True Shepherds or Ministers.
2. Orderly in their Tents, inspecting and ministering to the Flock of Christ.
3. Christs Flock, the holy convocation or solemn Assemblies of his people.
4. The footsteps, orderly, regular motion,

tion, convention and assembling, by which they are distinct from the Flocks of his Companions.

Though these four, contain no more, then what all the reformed Churches have asserted, they may appear more distinct, and particular, being taken altogether, and in their due order, most aptly guide us, in our communion with the Church, and therefore let us severally, and fervently consider them.

The first Note of Christs true Church is, The shepherds, or true Ministers therein consist: Christ the shepherd and Bishop of our souls, whilst he is immediately in the Heavens, at the right hand of the Father, ministring for his Church, doth immediately by men, and their ministry, ordinarily minister his Mediatorship in, and to his Church; he ascended on high, and gave gifts unto men; Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers, Pastors, for the work of the ministry,

Varios ministeriorum ordines, in Ecclesia constituit Christus, eosque variis donis secundum cuiusque vocationem ornavit; sed ad unum eundemque finem, hoc est, Ecclesiae exedificationem. Zanch.

for Church Confirmation. 131

for the edifying of the Body of Christ, for the perfecting of the Body, till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ, Ephes. 4. 11, 12. Nothing is more clear in Sacred Writ, then that Christ hath committed his Sheep on Earth, to ordinary shepherds, other subordinate Ministers, duly called to this ministration, who are charged, as they love him, to feed his Flock. When God was to determine between his true Church, and the gathered Church of Corah, he caused Aaron's Rod to bud, and bring forth fruit, thereby testifying his standing Ministry fixed in his Church, and established a true and infallible Character of its existency, and Symbol of his presence with them: Hence when by the defection of Jeroboam, the dispute was, which was Gods true Church; the ordinary determination; was the standing existency of the

There is nothing more material then that men be satisfied in their spiritual Guides: How desirous was God in this case, to give satisfaction to the obstinate: Aaron's Rod was his Pastoral staffe, and God testifies his approbation of his charge by making it fruitful; Israel might now see the Ministry, by which God was present among them.
Halls Contempl.

lawful Ministry; Ye have cast of the Priests the Sons of Aaron; but as for us the Priests which minister before the Lord are the Sons of Aaron, 2 Chron. 13. and under the Gospel a lawful Preacher is declared essential, to the working of true and saving Faith; The Apostle hath drawn the Climax; How can we believe on whom we have not heard? How can we hear without a Preacher? And how can he preach except he be sent? Rom. 10. 14. They that will know Gods true Church, must behold the beauty of their feet, who bring glad tidings from Zion; False Prophets which run, when the Lord sent them not, usually attend Israels departure from the Temple of the Lord, and the Ark of his presence: False Prophets usually draw Disciples after them, to the breaking of the unity of Christs Church: A rejection of Gods standing Ministry is the natural act of sinful separation from Gods true Church: Self consecrated Ministers are ordinarily found in Self constituted Churches: but Ministers not taking this honour to themselves, but called of God as was Aaron: Lawful Ministers not laying their hands on their own heads, but duly ordained by the laying on the hands of the Presbytery, existing in the Church, are

for Church-Communion. 133

a Token of Gods presence, and Character of the true Church of Christ, with which we are to hold communion; these are the *Shepherds*, by whose *Tents* the wandring Sheep, not knowing where to rest, are directed to *lie down and feed*.

And note, *Ministers truly ordained*, as to the substance of their ordination, though not so *duly*, *regularly*, and *orderly*, as to the Circumstances, and Agents in their ordination as were to be wished, and desired, are the true Ministers of Christ: irregularity of Order makes not a nullity of Ordinance. God calleth no man *immediately* into the work of the Ministry; and whilst he manageth this call *mediately by men*, we must expect much of miscarriage in the management of it; which must not make void his Ordinance *truly*, and according to his own institution applied: Hence our reformed Divines have well observed against the *Separatists*, who reject our Church and Ministry, because derived to us by the hands of Bishops, and Lord Bishops, that this is if any disorder, (which hath been, and is yet a Dispute) yet but in *circumstance*, not in *substance*; for that they are *Presbyters*, and ordain

The Superiority they take or challenge over their Brethren, makes not a difference or nullity in the substance of their Ministry. Conformists, and Non-conformists agree in this, That Ministers rightly qualified, and preaching the Doctrine of Salvation, be the Ministers of Jesus Christ, whether ordained by Bishops or Presbyters.

Ed on the *Canticles*,
p-93, 94

as *Presbyters*, in common imposition of hands with other *Presbyters*, cannot be denied: and on supposition that they ordained as *Bishops*, a distinct Order of Ministry, it is well noted this may be their own *personal error*, it is not of the substance of the Ordinance, and cannot nullify the act; for men doubly capacitated to an act, may act imaginarily by one; but that act operateth really and effectually by the other; as Mr. Burroughs amplifies the case, *The contribution to all is in a false and supposed Deacon; a real act of Christianity, though but our imaginary act of Deaconsbip*: There may be something in the Persons, and manner of applying Ordination, which may be liable to exception; but so long as it enter not into the substance of the Ordinance applied, that Ordinance operateth, is valid and effectual.

Men

for Church-Commutation. 235

Men that are ordained to the Ministry of the Church (though needfully examined and tryed as they ought to be) by *lawful Ministers* (though with the exclusion of some who have no less power and authority) by *Prayer and Imposition of hands* (though in an Order, and with some Appendants, and Accidents separable from the Ordinance it self, unjustly obnoxious to exception, and to be reformed) are *lawful Ministers of Christ*, and their Ministration valid and effectual in, and to the Church; and so farre as this one Character reacheth, that cannot be denied to be a Church of Christ, in which they do exist: Hence all Protestant Divines, Non-conformists, as well as Conformists, have acknowledged, asserted, defended, the validity, and true existency of *Ministerial Office, and Authority* in the Church of *Rome*, and under those Superstitious Rites, that rude Order, and Anti-christian Authority, by which it hath been conveyed, and applyed, which notwithstanding, any, in their recess from

London Ministers The Divinum & Ministerium, part 2. cap. 1. page 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Rome, have been owned as Christians lawfully baptized by a Roman Priest; nor hath

They who think the baseli of *Rome*, will acknowledge the Baptism administred by Priests and Jesuits to be true for substance: and if their Baptism be true, it is no absurdity to say their ministry is true.

Ball on the Obstacles.
p. 102.

it been judged in any of the reformed Churches necessary, to rebaptize those, who have been in *Rome* baptized; nor to re-ordain their Ministers, ordained with Roman Rites, who exist lawful Ministers, and that in a Church true in its being, only wanting

the reformation of those abuses, which so greatly oppress it, that there can be no safety in communion with her, in her present state, she being unsound and unsociable, though truly subsisting. Could *Rome* have ceased their pretence of succession of Princely Prelates, and Lordly Bishops, Heads of the Catholick Church, as the great and only mark of her being a Church of Christ, we should not have denied her Ministry in its succession to have continued an undeniable evidence of her entity, though not an excuse for her defection, Apostacy, and degeneration from that primitive state, and sound Ministrations of Christ the Mediator, which interdicts that

that communion, which her being might engage, and the truth of her Ministry inviolate.

Again observe ; Ministry truly conferred, and substantially existent, though not faithfully, piously, and diligently executed, is the true Ministry ; however the Brownists separating from the Church, charge a nullity on the Ministry, by the idleness, ignorance, weakness, error, prophaneness, and negligence of Ministers. All sober men, even such as were known Non-conformists, have ever asserted the sons of Eli, whose prophaneness made the people loath the Offerings of the Lord ; the Priests and Prophets which caused Gods People to erre, who walked with falshood, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, dumb Dogs

It is one thing to sacrifice at Bethel, where God hath neither Priest nor Law, and another to worship God according to his own appointment, though the Ministers be not such as they ought to be.

Ball on the Anf. to Can. p:101.

Qualescunque mores sunt doctrina est recipienda. Pisc.

Mat. 23. 3.

Si illi servi non timent Deum etiam ego non timeam ; quali non sciam dictum esse servare nequam & perire.

Aug. in Ioh.

that

that could not bark, and greedy Dogs devouring the Fleece, without regard to the Flock, Priests that taught for hire, and Prophets that prophesied for money; they who prophesied out of their own heart, and followed their own Spirits: Scribes and Pharisees, who taught for Doctrines the Traditions of men, and made the Word of God of none effect, by their own Traditions: yea, such as preached Christ out of envy against the true Apostles; to have existed true lawful Ministers, the Subjects of a true Ministry, the mark of Gods true Church, from which separation was never enjoined or allowed, to which communion was not to be denied by Gods People, or true Prophets, by Christ, or his Apostles, and Disciples; distinction is to be made between the Office, and Subject of the Office; the one is blame worthy, when the other may be justified: the defects and disorders of the Officer destroys not the Office, and make not a nullity of the Ministry; the error of Persons is not the fault of the Church, nor to be charged as her Doctrine: The prophane-ness of Ministers may be the reproach of the Ministry, the shame and grief of the Church, the Scandal of the weak, render the ministration less acceptable, less successful,

cessful, but it doth not render it null, and void; nor is its Ministration ineffectual and invalid. None but Brownists, and their brood, rashly receding from the communion of the Church, and groundlessly separating from the Ministrations thereof, did ever suppose or inferre a nullity of Ministry, from the weakness, rudeness, error and prophaneness of Ministers.

In enquiring after Christs true Church by this mark, our care must be to take heed we do not confound the Office, and humane Order of applying the Office, the substance of Ordination, which is from the Lord, and the circumstances of conveyance, which are from men, and may much savour of men, the entity and authority of the Office, and the error, and prophaneness of the Officer, lest we be misguided by a false conception. That the Ministry hath run through the Antichristian Channel, as hath

Successio Doctrinae potius quam personarum spectanda, nam ex doctrina personae non ex persona doctrina est iudicanda. *Willel.*

Baptism, the Scriptures, and all the things of God, been applyed by Antichristian Ministers, with some undue Antichristian Rites, some of which may be unduly retained

retained in some reformed Churches ; or that some, to whom it is committed, and entrusted, may be men *erroneous in doctrine, and prophane in life*, must not determine to us a *nullity of the Ministry*, and *non-entity of the Church*, lest we be forced to go out of the World to seek a Church, with which to hold communion.

Yet lastly observe, The *true Ministry*, though a mark of the true Church, and that *certain, and infallible*, yet it *alone* will not be *sufficient* to guide our communion, for that it may be found in an *Apostate*, and *Schismatick Church*, the Organ of *Apostacy* and *Schism*, though by accident, and therefore we must joyn to it the second.

The second *Mark and Token of Christs true Church*, with which we must keep communion, is, *Shepherds in their Tents*, duly *inspecting*, and *ministring to Christs Flock*. The Ministers of his Church, have as their *institution* from the Lord Christ our Mediator, so also from him they have their *Commissions*, and *Instructions*, which whilst with care, and faithfulness they do observe, and accordingly *inspect*, and *minister* to the Church,

for Church-Communion. 141

Church, they are as *Shepherds fixed in their Tents*, visible to the whole world, for the due guidance and direction of Christs wandering Sheep, where to rest, and enjoy communion with comfort, and security, in a day of danger, temptation, and seduction; but if they *recede from their Commission*, and *pursue not their instructions from the Lord*, in the substance thereof; they become *shepherds of no value*, withdrawn from their Tents, betraying the Flock of Christ to danger and destruction, and cannot be the *mark and token* by which Souls may be guided unto the *true Church*, with which they must hold communion; the *authority* of Office, and *exigency* of a lawful Ministry, without a *due ministration* of the truth of Christs Word, and Ordinances, may, but must not be allowed to misguide poor Souls; if Christs Ministers *feed not the Flock with Christs own Institutions*, Ordinances *substantially* his own, they must not be followed, but rather fled from; and the *authority* of their Ministry must not fright the people of the Lord to communion with the Assemblies subjected to such their Ministrations: when the Ministers of God, will not minister the *Ordinances of Gods worship* which him-
self

self appointed; they violate their trust; transgress their Commission; and perfidiously abuse his Authority; against himself; to the destruction of his Church: They that are the *Ministers* which become the marks of a *true Church*, are such as minister to *Gods Church*, *Gods own Institutions*, *Christs true Word and Sacraments*, and no other; otherwise they are *false Guides*, to be avoided. The Protestant Divines do well avoid the succession of Bishops, the mark of a Church urged by Bellarmine and the *Papists*; by an enquiry after the *succession of Doctrine*, and the *Administrations of the Sacrament*, not of the persons of the *Ministers*; but well conclud-

Localis successio de
stituta doctrinali suc-
cessionem, nullius erit
momenti nec est nota
Ecclesie.
Gerh. La. Comde Eccles.
cap. 5. sect. 5.

ding, *Ministry* continued in *due and faithful ministrations of true worship*, is the mark of a *true Church*; but *Ministers* continued in a ministrations of *false worship*, is the mark of a *false Church*; and the *authority* under such *perfidie* and *false ministrations*, and deprived of the truth, is of *no moment*, nor hath any force to make a *mark of the true Church*, with which to hold communion. The *truth of Christs worship*, cannot

not be exhibited to his Church but by a lawful Ministry, nor can his Ministers exist, and appear in his Church to be only his, but by truly administering his Mediation, according to his own appointment. There is a necessary connection, inseparable from the Church, as the Mark thereof; but the continuation, and propagation of the true doctrine, and administration, and form, which it is now Christ and his Apostles did institute in the primitive Churches, and which could not exist without a Minister of the true God, when he formed the Idol Calf at Horeb, and sacrificed to it for the people. Nor were Nadab and Abihu his Sons to be followed, as the Ministers of the true God, when they ministred false fire before the Lord; yet they were, and could not be denied to have been consecrated to the service of his Altar. In this case we are to remember what is well observed by a grave, pious Prelate of our Church, If God had enjoined ordinary fire, they had sinned.

Nulla est successio Ecclesie simpliciter necessaria, & omnino inseparabilis ab ea, propter continuationem, propagationem, eundem doctrinam & administrationem formam, quam Christus per Apostolos in Ecclesia prima legitur constituisse.

Beil. Enerv. p. 72.

Bishop Hall his Contemplations on Nadab and Abihu, Book 6.

sinned to look for celestial: Now he commanded the fire which he sent, they sinned in sending up

Incense in this fire which he commanded not. It is a dangerous thing in the service of God, to decline from his own Institution; we have to do with a Power which is wise to prescribe his own worship, and just to require what he hath prescribed, and powerful to avenge that which he hath not required. No sober man, or serious Christian can imagine Israel bound to follow the conduct of Uriah the Priest of the Lord, when he framed the Altar, and sacrificed on it, built after the pattern of the Altar at Damascus, as King Ahaziah commanded him, contrary to the institution of the Lord: When the Priests of the Lord ministred in the high places of Israel, and the Prophets prophesied lyes, they could not therein be the mark and note of a true Church. The Apostle warneth the Church at Ephesus, to take heed of Apostate heretical Ministers, which should arise from among themselves, teaching perverse things, and drawing Disciples after them, Acts 20. 30. and chargeth the Romans to know, and avoid those false Apostles which were among them making division, Rom.

for Church Communion. 149

16. 17. The Ancients never admitted the Ministry in the abstract, to be the *only mark* of *Christ's true Church*; but adjoynd to it the verity of Doctrine, and therefore concluded *Antioch*, though first planted by *Peter*, could not be owned and followed as the Church of *Christ* under the heretical ministrations of *Paulus Samosatenus*, and other horrid Hereticks; nor the Church at *Alexandria*, when overspread with the heretical Ministrations of *Arrinus*, *Georgius*, *Eusebius*, *Dyscorus*, and other blasphemous Hereticks, debasing *Christ* our *Mentation*, and darkening his *Worship*, and making his *Mediation* of none effect. And at this day, although the existence of Ministry may remain in *Rome*, as a token of her relation to *Christ*, yet

Omnes hi decidunt a veritate, & heretici alienum ignem ad altare Dei offerentes non sunt assequendi sed suspecti habentur.

Irenaeus lib. 4. cap. 43. p. 177.

Illae Ecclesiae sunt scilicet Apostolicarum Ecclesiarum qui conservant traditam fidei semina doctrinae.

Tertullianus lib. 1. cap. 17. p. 102.

God forbids, the Truth debate our reconciliation with *Rome*, for that the *Roman Church* is anciently declined from the purity of Religion which she once professed, to the utter extinguishing the Faith of *Christ*.

Hall No peace with *Rome*, sect. 5, 6, 7, 8.

the false Ministration of this Ministry, giving the worship of Christ to others, making them Mediators with or to him, seeking justification by works to the overthrow of his Mediatorship, turning the Sacraments into Sacrifices for sin, and that both for quick and dead; and so Ministers of the saving and standing memorial of the death of our Saviour, into Mass Priests sacrificing, not ministering before the Lord, and the like abominable, and blasphemous exercises, though managed in the name of Christ, are manifest tokens that the is not so true in being, but as false in ministration; an impure Apostate Church, in which we cannot enjoy the true ministrations of the Mediator, so as to obtain salvation by them.

True ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship, ministered by the true Ministers of Christ, is the essential Character of the Church of Christ; defects, disorders, rudeness in the Externals, and Circumstantials of Ministration, may attend, and accompany, truth of ministration; but that must exist as to substance of things ministered, and essential form of ministration, if we will infallibly determine, (and thereby we may do it) the Church with which we are to hold communion:

for Church-Communion. 147

nion: *Miscarried Circumstances* will not conclude *against*, nor a *mistaken substance in worship* consist *with the truth of Christs Church*. Peter is to be withstood, not followed, when he basely betrayeth the Mediatorship of Christ his Master, making it of none effect, by falling in with those of the *Circumcision*, which would overthrow the Faith: And though Paul, or an Angel from Heaven should bring us another Gospel then that of Christ the Mediator, he is to be *accursed*.

The third and fourth Mark of Christs true Church I shall put together, and manage as one, because as the two former they must both exist, to make an *infallible* mark, *alwayes*, and *only* discovering *Christs true Church*, and they are these; *Flocks* or *joynt Assemblies*, couching in Christs Pastures, or convened under his ministrations; and their *footsteps*, orderly, visible motions, by which they may be followed, in order to communion with them: Convention is *necessary* for the demonstration of a Church, and *orderly convention unto his worship* doth evidence the Church of the God of Order. I have before shewed Gods sabbath must be sanctified by an *holy convocation*: his Tabernacle is the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*;

Psal. 84.

he is known in *Zion*, and in *Zion* his People grow from *strength to strength*; a room in *Gods Sanctuary*, to be in *Gods holy Mountain*, to be joyful in his *House of Prayer*, is an Argument of relation to *God*, and of af-

Isai. 56. 3, 4.

fection from the *Lord*;

continuance in the *Apostles Doctrine*, and fellowship was the open demonstration of the *first Church of Christ*: Association is an Argument of *common interest*: forsaking the *Assemblies*, and going out from the *Church* was an evidence of *non-relation to the Church*; dispersed Strangers, Saints scattered through *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia*, and *Bythinia* may be the People of *God*, but they do not exist a *Church*; the object of communion, without *convention*, and *solemn Assemblies*, wherein to worship the *Mediator*; nor yet, as we have before noted, will every *religious Assembly* make the *Church of Christ*; they must, *orderly, regularly assemble*, their footsteps must be *visible*, such as are plain, easie to be seen, and orderly in their motion towards the *Shepherds Tents*, to the due *ministration* of *Christs mediatorship*, by *true Ministers*: Such as walk in *by-paths*, with rude, and unusual tracts, running from con-

situted

for Church Communion. 149

stituted Churches, and stated Assemblies, do appear to be wandering Sheep, breaking from the Flock, not the Flock of Christ it self; the company of Corab, the Congregation of the Circumcision, with whom Peter separated; the Assemblies of the Arrians, Donatists, Novatians; the separating Brownists, and their brood the self-constituting, Church-gathering Congregationalists; in short, all who leave orderly Assemblies, openly convening to worship the Lord, and assemble in Conventicles opposite thereto, do by their very motion, witness they are not the Church, but recede, depart from the Church, with which communion ought to be held: Publick Conventions of Christs Church, and private Conventicles, have ever been contradistinct in all Ages of the Church: the publick worship of God required it, and the order of humane Society prompted it, that Oratories, Temples, forms of ministration, and other things requisite to publick Assemblies, should be, and were determined by due authority of the Church it self, without or with the access of a Christian Magistrate, which having been once limited and appointed, they who from thence unwarrantably withdraw, unto other Assemblies, for the Exercises of Religion, have in all Ages of the Church been censured,

And The Saints care

red, and that not unjustly, as *Conventicles*, and *unlawful Assemblies*, to be avoided by all such as keep communion with the Church: truth of Doctrine, doth not more manifestly distinguish the true Church from heretical, and pure ministrations differ the true from Apostate Antichristian Churches, then unity and order in subjection to the publick ministrations, do distinguish between a true, and schismatical Church; Gods Altar, and Tabernacle must be but one: they who in a divided State, worship the true God, with Ordinances of his own appointment, can only be determined false by the disorder of Assembly, and divided state of such ministration.

That we may therefore determine the true Church, which it is, and where it is, we must take these notes *in complexo*, all together, and not *divisim*, singly; where we find one of these single, and alone, we may be deceived; but where we find them all agreeing to, and existing in any Assembly, we may infallibly conclude *this is the Church of Christ*, with which we must hold communion: there may be publick orderly Assemblies of Christians under a false Minister, who

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runs of his own accord unsent, there may be a true Minister ministring false matter, offering false fire before the Lord; there may be a true Minister ministring true matter of worship in a false, disorderly, schismatical assembly, and yet no true Church; but where a true Minister ministreth Gods true worship, to Christs true Flock of visible baptized Christians, duly, orderly convened in union with the Catholick visible Church, there we must pronounce the Lord feeds his Flock, and maketh them to rest at noon; these are the Shepherds Tents, these are the foot-steps, visible tracts, of the Flocks to be found, and followed through all Ages, and places of the World, ever since the Church of Christ did first exist in it.

GAP.

121
...there may be
...offer-
...there may be
...time matter of
...ecclesiastical
...Church; but
...God the
...of a few
...ordinarily contained in
...with the Catholic world Church,
...the Lord, & this
...rest at once, these
...the foot-
...of the flock to be found,
...and places
...the Church of
...Christ do not exist in it.

CAP. VI.

*Perfwading a care to keep Communion with
the Church: opening the evil and sin-
fulness of Schifm.*

I Have done with the first Exhortation,
and perfwaded with you, by due dili-
gence to labour to know which is the true
Church, where Christ feedeth his flock, and
maketh them to rest at noon: And to the
guidance of you in an Enquiry so serious
and necessary, I have laboured to discover
those false marks of a Church, by which
some being deceived, they follow the flocks
of Christ's companions: and those true marks
which infallibly determine this Object; and
shew us with certainty the true Church, in
communion with which we are bound to
live and dye: and now come to the second
Exhortation.

Exhort. 2. Seeing such as love Christ, must
be careful to keep communion with the Church
of Christ: Let all who love the Lord Jesus,

be exhorted, entreated, perswaded to approve their affection to him, *by constant conscientious communion with his Church*: having once ascertained to your selves the *solemn Assemblies* of God's People; *Forsake not the assembling of your selves together as the manner of some is*: being brought into this *Ark of Salvation*, be careful to keep in it: *leap not out of it*; be not cast out of it: in point of Salvation, it is all one to go out, or be cast out of the Ark of God; but in case of guilt, the Self-excommunicate is the more desperate: being baptised into his body, *grow up with it in love*; be careful to do all *acts of communion* with it; possess with comfort the *common Priviledges* to it belonging, and ministred: perform with care the *duties* which you in your places owe to this Body, for the *edification of the whole*. You are called; O come to the fellowship of the Saints; do not easily, rashly, without great reason, *run from*, and *renounce this Society*; do not recede from, or *refuse communion* with this fellowship; It is sad to see many that pretend to love Christ, leave his Church; many who profess union with the Head, rend themselves from his Body, and *rend his Body in pieces*. Let me perswade you with the *pathetical perswasion of St. Augustine*, in the case

case of the Donatists
Schisma: The holy Church
 in which the Authority of
 the Sacraments are ter-
 minated, a chaste Mother
 and Virgin, the Spouse of
 Christ, doth piously non-
 rish her Children, whom
 she striveth to present wor-
 thy of God their Father. O
 good Children, love such a
 Mother: O good children,
 donot forsake her, daily re-
 quiring your attendance, in
 your reciprocal communi-
 on; love her who loveth
 you; she is such an one, she
 is so noble, she is so fruit-
 ful of a Royal Progeny; do
 not suffer her to be torn in
 pieces by the injuries of
 the worst of children; by
 the conspiracies of the
 worst of servants: it is
 not an Arrian Heretick
 doth insult over the Church:
 no, it is a Wolf in Sheeps

clothing;
 sanctæ Matris nutriti, usque ad solidum cibum perduci
 solis; in ea manete. Aug. de Symbol, ad Catechumenos.

Sancta Ecclesia in
 qua terminatur Sacra-
 menti authoritas, Ma-
 ter & Virgo, corpore
 casta, prole secunda,
 Sponsa Christi; pie
 nutrit filios quos Deo
 patri dignos assignare
 contendit. O filii bo-
 ni, amate tantam Ma-
 trem, & filii boni no-
 lite de ferere quotidie
 vos requirentem, re-
 pendite vicem, amate
 amantem: tanta est, ta-
 lis est, nobilis est, re-
 gia prole fecunda;
 non eam patiamini aut
 filiorum pessimorum
 injuriis, aut servorum
 malorum insidiis ma-
 cerari. Agite causam
 Matris vestræ; Hereti-
 cus Arrianus, non in-
 sultat Ecclesiam; Lupus
 est agnoscite, Serpens
 est, ejus capita con-
 quassate, blanditur sed
 fallit, multa promittit,
 sed decipit: male serve,
 dominam calcas, ve-
 ram Matrem impug-
 nas, ad hoc pascis esu-
 rientem, ut animæ au-
 ferascibum celestem
 Vos autem dilectissimi
 qui ab initio uberibus

clothing; know him; it is a Serpent, break his head; he flattereth, but deceiveth; he promiseth much, but faileth all whom he enticeth: O wicked Schismatick! thou kickest thy Mistris; thou opposest the only true Mother; for this thou feedest the hungry, that thou wayest take away the heavenly food from their soul. But ye O Beloved, who from your being Babes have been nourished by the breast-milk of this holy Mother the Church, until you are brought up to feed on more solid food, continue in union and communion with her. Whilst the Body of Christ sits whole in Heaven, do not tear the Members of it each from other here on Earth below. Christian Souls, as you will appear baptized into one spirit, be careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; constant union, careful communion with the Church, is the Churches honour, and our own advantage; the Covenant of Grace, the Priviledges of Peace, the Promises of Salvation, are the common right of the Church, and can no way belong to us, but in communion with the Church, as we have before noted among many other Reasons very swasive to this duty. If we will approve our affections to the Lord, Let us live in due fellowship with his Church; here enjoy in common, the provision of Word and Sacraments, with which

which he doth feed his Flock; take heed of *needless* recels from, *causeless* non-communion with, *groundless* separation from the Church: know that Schism *in*, and more especially *from* the Church, are to be avoided; and he who with care keeps not the communion of the Church, cannot be acquitted from *Schism*. That you may the more freely and readily be induced to keep the communion of the Church, Let me lay before you Schism *its opposite* in the *sinfulness* and *nature* of it: I will endeavour to shew how vile it is, and wherein it consists.

Motive. That the *evil of Schism* may awe into the care of Church-communion, consider; It is an *Evil*, and a *very great Evil*; of which, though many among us, too too many, make light account, as if of all sins, the smallest, most venial, and most consistent with salvation; and that, the detection of which, should never trouble the *Minister's head*; or the avoiding of it, trouble the *People's heart*: Sure I am, all Divines both ancient and modern, Papist and Protestant, Conformist and Non-conformist, have ever adjudged and declared it a most *horrid crime*, grievous *sin*, and a *Church-confound- ing*, a most *soul-damning* Evil. To produce *Aqui-*

Aquinas 2. 2da Quæst.
39. Ar. 1, 2.

men concluding *Schism* a grievous sin against the unity of the Church, and most grievous sin against our Neighbour, will be pushed at as the censure of *Rome's Angelical Doctor*,

Conrade Brunius de
Heres. & Schism.

Bellarmino and *Brunius* concluding, that *Schism* dissolving the union of the

Church, is the most pestiferous and pernicious Evil that can be; will be pushed at as the opinion of *Roman Doctors*, and *Rome's Defendants*: yet thus much must be noted, cannot be denied; In this point they are true in *Thesis*, though false in *Hypothesis*: and *Chameir*, *Cameron*, *Jewel*, *Willis*, *Gerhard*, *Polanus*, *Amesius*, and all Protestants, have acknowledged the evil of *Schism*, but acquitted the reformation and recess from *Rome* from so black an imputation, denying the formality of it in act, rather than the iniquity of *Schism*. To

Hall's Disuasion from
Separation, Decad. 6.
Epist. 5. and his A-
pology against the
Brownists.

hear Bishop *Hall* dissuade Separation, and inveigh against the *Brownists*, will be to many men of

little force, who flye from every thing spoken by a Prelate, though a Minister of the Reformed Churches, to be honoured for his holy Contemplations, and soundness of Doctrine: yet methinks the Non-conforming *Cartwright*, *Bal*, *Hilderham*, *Hind*, *Nicols*,

Nicals, Brinsley, Firmin, and many others, determining and dilating the evil of Schism, and with zeal declining, resisting it, should be acknowledged men worthy of *some reverence and credit.* St. *Augustine*, though steered by his peculiar zeal against the *Novatians*, judged *Schism* a more grievous sin than the *Calf at Horeb*; than *Jebojakim's burning the Prophetick Roll*, Jer. 36, than the *Traditores burning their Bibles*; and infers the most *horrid vileness of this sin*, from the most *terrible, miraculous, and extraordinary Judgment by which God punished the same in Corah and his Company. Musculus*, and many Modern Divines, declare *Schism* to be *worse than Heresie*: yea, amongst others, we cannot pass the censure of it by the *great Casuist*, of all Divines most tender in the case of separations from the Church; and he calls it *peccatum gravissimum*, the most grievous sin; and the Learned *Hales* brands

See Ball's two Treatises against Can, discussing the Separation: *Brinsley's Schism arraigned & convicted.* *Firminius new Separation examined.*

August. Contra. Don.
lib. 2. cap. 6.

Sunt qui peccatum Schismatis, adaequant peccato Heresis; sunt qui illud adhuc praesto exaggerent. *Musculus* Loc. Com. de Schif.

Ames Cas. Consc. lib. 5. cap. 12. de Schism.

Hales Tract of Schism P. 2.

it with the odious name of an *Ecclesiastick* *sedition*. Schism is a sin so odious, that in no Age of the Church would it be owned by its chiefest Subjects; who would rather chuse to justify their separation, than any way deny the *wileness of the sin*; nor can we wonder to find so black a representation of it by men of all perswasions, when we observe the account which the holy Scriptures do give of it; take notice therefore of these few demonstrations of the exceeding great evil of this Iniquity.

I. Schism is an act of a carnal spirit, of

Carnales appellant
quibus caro spiritui
prævalet: cuius rei
testimonium erit Schis-
ma. *Peza Annot.*

an unregenerated Soul; the natural fruit of the flesh: the divisions in the Church of *Corinth* did evidence them to be car-

nal, and walking as men, 1 Cor. 3. 3. and they who separated from the Church, are by the Apostle *Jude* denominated *sensual men*. that had not the spirit, Jude 19. and those whom the Author to the *Hebrews* chargeth to have forsaken the assembling of themselves, were such as drew back to perdition; and are opposed to such who believed unto the salvation of their soul, Heb. 10. 39. Saints, be ye not deceived; your rash recesses from the Church, your groundless non-communion, your causeless separation, is an evidence you

are so far unregenerated, and in a carnal state, under the power of lust, and predominancy of the flesh.

2. Schism from the Church, is an argument of *non-union*

with, *non-relation to the*

Church, 1 Joh. 2. 19. They

were not of us; for if they

had been of us, *they would*

have continued with us:

but they went out from us,

that it might appear they

all were not of us. Heresies and Schisms are

sometimes necessary in, and to the Church,

for the *discovering of Hypocrites*: Many

are *called*, but few are *chosen*. The chosen

of God live in constant communion. Many

that are *called*, make *defection*, and discover

they were not *chosen*. Dead Members easily

break off from the Body; but the *living* must

be *cut off with pain and grief*: They who

make as many *Bodies of Christ*, as Congre-

gations of *separating self-constituting Chri-*

stians, do minister much cause to suspect,

they were never really incorporated into

his Catholick Body; and they who separate

from the Church as a company of Hypo-

crites and meer Formalists, do by that very

act evidence themselves to have a *form of*

godliness, but *deny the power thereof*. It is not

more

Erant de Ecclesia numero non merito Sacramentorum perceptione, non charitatis communione; non erant ex nobis predestinatione & electione ergo recedebant.

Bence in Loc.

more manifest to *human sense*, that the wooden-leg laid aside with ease, was not by nature and in reality united to the body, and moved by its vital power, but only by art and in appearance joined to it, and moved for its good; than evident to faith, that *voluntary Separatists*, willingly cast out, of their own accord *departing from the society of the Church*, were never in truth and sincerity united to *Christ's Body*, which being compacted, groweth up together by that which every Joint supplieth; but by *Education* and *Hypocritical Art*, have been adjoined to it: for reality of unity is inconsistent with voluntary recess from the communion of the Church.

3. Schism is an *assault on, and violent rupture of Charity*: Charity the spring of union, and spur of communion; the bond of peace is hereby broken. Love is of all graces the chiefest; these three remain, *Faith, Hope, Charity*, and the greatest of these is *Charity*, the violence done to this, must needs be very grievous. Love is the whole of Religion, the fulfilling of the Law, the Principle of union with God, and the bond of communion with his Church, it cannot therefore be assaulted without great and *manifest irreligion*; nor violated without *palpable prophaneſs*; yet Schism breaks Charity in pieces,

pieces, and taketh it off its Wheels; it inverteth the whole operations of Love; instead of *hoping well*, it rashly *censureth*, and concludeth ill; instead of *covering a multitude of sins*, it *aggravateth and layeth open common infirmities*; instead of *suffering long*, it is soon *scandalized*, and runneth into rage, reproaching and censuring of such things and persons as were to be born with; instead of *esteeming others better than our selves*, it *vaunteth the holiness of its subjects*, with a Stand thou

further from me, for *I am holier than thou*. Who ever observed the Schismatick, and did not see

Schisma vinculum pacis dirumpit charitatem scilicet, &c.

Muscul. Loc. Com. de Schif.

plainly in him, a *suspicious head*, a *proud, swelling, and censorious heart*, and a *calumniating and reviling tongue*: all which are resisters and ruiners of Love. Schism in the ground, in the operation of it, in the very formality of its existence, is a breach of Peace, and Love the Bond of Peace.

4, Schism *abaseth Christ the Lord and Head of his Church*, and exposeth him to the contempt and blasphemy of a prophane world: for Schism representeth Christ a *Monster*; plainly suggesting, that he ministreth life and growth to Members *divided from, and contradistinct to his Body*; as if they could

hold

hold the Head, who run out of the union of the Body; or that he is divided, and maintaineth many Bodies, to which in a Monstrous manner he ministreth vital power and nurture, to the opposition each of other; when some are of Paul, some of Apollos, some of Cephas, and all pretend to Christ: Christ seemeth divided, and to be destroyed: Oh how sad is it thus to blaspheme the Lord of Love and Union! And yet further, Schism doth represent Christ our Mediator, who appears, and is acknowledged the God of Order amongst men, to be only a God of Confusion in the Assemblies of his Saints; as if his Church only were left without Rule, Means, and Method, whereby to cure her distempers, and correct the defections and disorders of her Members; and under these there were no remedy, but running out of the Church, and rending from communion with it: Can any thing be more sinfully devised, more shamefully divulged, more dishonourably charged on Him the God of Glory, Unity, Holiness, Peace, and Order, than that he is a Prince of Confusion, leaving his people at liberty, to live in, or leap out of society and publike communion, at their own will, and according to the apprehension of their private Fancy? Yet thus doth Schism present him to the World. Can any thing

For Church-Communion.

thing more monstrous be imputed to Christ,
 than that he is the Head of different, dis-
 agreeing Bodies, ministering communion with
 himself, to several distinct Societies, who
 hold no union each with other, nor commu-
 nion among themselves? Yet Schism, dissol-
 ving the *union of Christ's Body*, doth thus
 represent him, *but boog nud*, *schism*
 Schism doth afflict the Church; the di-
 vision of the Members *Aded diviserant, ut*
 disquiets the Peace, di- *invicem communicare*
 turbs the Order, distracts *sacram communio non*
 the Ministrations, and *dignarentur, sed sin-*
 threateneth destruction to *gulae sanctiones in a-*
 the Church. How great *gebant: quare; factio*
 confusions attended the *separatim edit, & non*
 publike Ministrations of *dominica sed pro-*
 the blessed Communion *priam editis cœna:*
 of the Body and Blood of *cœna domini esset*
 Christ, by reason of the *communio, & quare*
 schisms in the Church at *potius Ecclesie. Par. in*
 Corinth, and the *loc.*
 separated communication of the same, to
 the exposing the Church to contempt, the
 Assembly to disorder, and the very pervert-
 ing of the holy Sacrament, St. Paul witnesseth
 in 1 Cor. II. 17, 18, 19, &c. Schism in the
 Church, like that in the Body, which Physi-
 cians call *dissolutio continui*, tearing the
 parts and joints each from other, causeth
 smart and pain, and breedeth Everish Di-

stemper

Stempers to the Body: for the *divisions* of
 Reuben were great thoughts or grief of heart,
 Judg. 5. 15. When the Judaizing Christians
 in Galatia separated from the Gentile Chri-
 stians, to the procreating Hatred, Variance,
 Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Envy-
 ings, and provoked the holy Apostle to that
 passionate, but good and just Execration,
Would they were even cut off which trouble
you; Who can otherwise think but the
 Church was in a Fever, in an horrid *distra-*
ction, and hot *dissemper*? Whosoever is in
 any measure read in Ecclesiastical Story,
 and observeth the Epi-
 stles of *Augustine* and *Je-*
rome each to other, and
 sometimes to the *Magi-*
strates, whetting their very Sword; and the
 many fearful *distractions*, *tumults*, *hurl-*
burles, and *uproars*, in many places, occasi-
 oned by the *Donatists Schism*; must needs
 confess, that Schism (the *spring of confusion*,
 and *spurr of disorder*) cannot but create
 great *disquietness* to the Church. I cannot
 but admire with what content or composure
 of spirit men can assemble and attend Di-
 vine Ministrations, under the sounding of
Trumpets, beating of *Drums*, and *Alarums*
 of *Warr*, whilst the Essentials of Chari-
 ty lye at stake, to be sacrificed on the Blood
 of

of Martyrs; but sound their guilt who can suppose the Church to be *edified* under so great distraction and disorder. Indeed the *Confusion* or *Schism* in their Tongue, hindred the building of *Babel*. What may we suppose a confusion of hands, one pulling down what another built, would have effected? No one thing can more hinder the *edification* of the Church, than *confusion* of Heads, Hearts, and Hands, which Schism doth naturally engender. Sea-men tell us, the Ship is at the back stays, when one sail draws one way; another, another way; the Ship stands still, is hindered its Voyage, and endangered as to its safety and security; but the parts divided, distract, and threaten destruction to the Whole.

6. Schism maketh way for Heresie, and is its great advantage, and total separation from Christ the Head, and the Catholick Doctrine of Faith. Jerome tells us, there is no Schism within a little time deviseth not some Heresie, that the separation may be supposed more justifiable. And

Consensu stat & sub-
nixa est Ecclesie Salus.
Cano.

Corpus organicum
non potest dissecari
quin totum & partes
interiant. For. 2. de

Nullum Schisma non
sibi aliquam confingit
Heresim; ut recte ab
Ecclesia rectissime videa-
tur. For. Com. in Tit.

Aqui-

Aquinas, though a *Papist*, was not out, when he concluded, *the loss of*

Sicut amissio Charitatis, est via ad amittendam fidem; ita etiam Schisma est via ad Hæresim. Aquin. 2.2. q. 39. ar. 3.

Charity is the way to lose Faith. So Schism is the way to Heresie: for the most sober Casuist himself concludeth, Schism maketh

Amei. Cal. Conf. de Schism.

way to Heresie and separation from Christ. All

the Lords People were holy, equal with the Priests, peculiarly consecrated to God, was the Doctrine fomented to palliate *Corah's Schism*, gathering a Church out of a Church. Christ received, the Law of *Moses* is yet to be observed, attended the Schism in the Churches of *Galatia*, *Philippi*, *Coloss*, and other Primitive Churches. The Church of Christ was extinct in the World, and to be revived by them, became the Apology for the *Donatist* Schism. What Monstrous Heresies New-Englands Schism fomented, let the Reports of their own Divines witness, and their choicest Friends, Christ's Champions deny if they can. I wish they who run, could not read in most capital Letters, the truth of this observation. That since Church-gathering Schism was known in England, she hath appeared an Hydra of heresie: and all horrid errors condemned in primitive times, and expelled all Reformed

ed Churches, have been here revived, fo-
mented, and defended, unto the very denial
of separation from the Church (the height,
and highest act of Schism) to be Schism.

You see, Christians, how great an evil
Schism is; Which of you professing love
to Christ the Lord, would at the day of his
appearance be found guilty of *acting as men
carnal*, whilst you affect to be reputed *spirit-
ual*? Of *arguing your non-union with the
Body*, who profess union with the Head?
To have *assaulted Charity*, who most emi-
nently pretend to Love? To have *abased
Christ your Lord*, for whose advancement
you pretend so much zeal? To have
afflicted the Church, whose Peace and
Order you seem so much to tender? Or to
advance Heresie, which you would be
thought so much to abhor? Yet I must tell
you, These are the *sad operations* which
shew the *sinfulness* of Schism. Be therefore
conscientiously careful to keep communion
with Christ's true Church; take heed of
groundless recess, and *sinful separation*. Let
the Text become your Guide in this Affair
of importance, crying to the Lord, *Tell me
O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feed-
est, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at
noon.*

CAP. VII.

*Shewing the nature of Schism, what it is;
wherein it is unjustly charged on some.*

HAVING laid before you the *sinfulness* of *Schism*, and shewed the ugly face of this enticing destroying *Panther*; methinks I find an horror on Souls, and general detestation of so vile an act, prompting you to cry out, But Sir, *What is Schism?* We have heard some make it a *Bug-bear* and *Scare-crow*, and charge it many times on men who live in *closest union*, and *most constant communion with the Church*. We can easily suppose there is *such sin* as *Schism*, which we would avoid, and believe too many fall into it; but about *Schism* it self we find a *Schism*, and must needs say, not only of People, but Ministers in common:

*Scinditur incertum studia in contraria
vulgus.*

Be pleased to help us to understand the *nature* of *Schism*; when *unjustly*, and when *justly* charged on the seeming-subjects thereof. I shall therefore endeavour to let you see what *Schism* is, wherein the *formality* of it consisteth; and give some notes on those cases wherein it is *falsly imputed*; and
examine

examine the *grounds* on which some who *separated* would be acquitted from so *sad* a *guilt*, but yet cannot on such produced *Reasons*.

The word *Schism* the Learned well know is a Greek term, derived from σχίζω, which signifies *Scindere*, or *lacerare*, to cut or rend by violence into parts or pieces, as Wood with Axes or Wedges is cut, or cloven, and rent in pieces; that, saith *Aretius*, and others, is the *proper signification* of the word. But in a *Metaphorical signification* it is used to express *division natural*, as signifying the rent in a *cloak* or *garment*; so in *Mat. 9. 16, 27, 51. Political*, or relating to human society, in some common act, to be jointly executed; and so it signifies *division of opinion*, and *expressions*, or *notion*, *John 7. 43. 9. 16. 10. 19. Acts 14. 4. 23. 7. and Ecclesiastical*, in reference to the Church, as the last and most *peculiar Schism*; noting the *rending* and *dividing the Members of the Church each from other, and from the union and communion of the whole*. Thus, as the learned *Cameron* doth observe, it is a term peculiarly found

Schisma proprie dicitur corporis solidi sectio; qualis in lignorum fissura, quæ unitas partes ligni dirimit.

Aret. Prob. Tom. 2do de Schif.

Σχίζω, ἔσλα ut Zen. Pla. Scap. Lex.

in the New-Testament, never in the Old, nor in any prophane Writer; and from thence Ecclesiastical Writers have referred and appropriated it to the Church, as *Technological*, or a term of Art to signifie any *specificall breach of Charity and Union* in the common concerns of Religion, and Ministrations of publike Worship to God.

The word we confesse is especially used in the Epistle to the *Corinthians*, to express the divisions which were *in that Church*, to the disturbance of its Peace and Order, and the *division of the Members in the common acts of Religion*, in reference to their Teachers; and acts of publike communion with the Church, *1 Cor. i. 18. 11. 18.* and

Vindication of Pref-
byt. pag. 113.

in concurrence with the late *London-Presbyters*,
I concede, That the

Schisms in the Church of Corinth were not divisions by which Christians did separate from the Church into divers formed Congregations of several communion in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; but from hence to infer, That such separation, and that groundlessly and unjustly made, is not a Schism, is a notion not known in the Christian World, till our late gathering Churches out of Churches, true and reform'd, pretended to be the great Gospel-work; and every particular

particular Assembly affected to be accounted
the *Body of Christ*, each of them pretend-
ing to a *monstrous union* to Him as their Head,
without any *act of communion* amongst
themselves; and cannot but seem a sense
most *absurd* and *unreasonable*: for if divisi-
on in the Church be

Dr Owen's Nature
of Schism.

Schism, it is much more
such, when it foment
and breaks into division *from the Church*.
Will any one say the rent in the Church is
Schism, and yet say rending the Cloath a-
sunder, one part quite off from the rest of
the Cloath, is not a Schism? *Disagreement*
and *distortion of Members* is a Schism in the
Body, but yet deny *disseccation* and *dissipati-*
on of one from another, to be a *schism from*
the Body; as if we could suppose in the pro-
per acceptation of the word, that to *chap,*
and *cleave*, and makes *rimes* and *gaps* in
Wood, were Schism; but to cut one piece
quite *asunder from another*, and from the
whole Beam, is no Schism. Did ever any in
Politicks suppose or suggest *divisions in O-*
pinions and *Expressions*, raising tumults or
commotions in the *assemblies* or *societies* of
men, was a *civil schism*; but division *from*
it, to the forming of a *counter-assembly* and
contradistinct corporation, self-constituted
society, to be ruled by the same Laws, per-

form the same Offices, and possess the same Priviledges, is not a *civil schism*, a *sedition*, as the Learned *Hales* affects to call it.

Schisms in a Church are sad and sinful; nor do we deny *intestine Divisions to be Schism*: but all Divines and Ecclesiastick Writers arguing *à minori ad majus*, have ever concluded, If *divisions in the Church*, which disturb its Peace and Order, be a Schism; *division from the Church* by separation, dissolving relation to, and dependance on its Being, and endangering its ruin and destruction, is much more eminently, fully, formally, a *schism*: And although the Apostolical times give not this *appellation of Schism*, because it might not then in this manner exist, all divisions in the Infancy of the Church, keeping *within the Church*: yet the following Ages, finding every Faction in the Church growing up, and *breaking out from the Church*, setting up themselves in *distinction from*, and *contrariety to the Church* wherein it did

Vox ista postea manifest in Ecclesia, ut illa notarentur hi, qui à concordia publica & studio pacis secederent, & privatos instituerent cœtus quales hodie sunt Anabaptistarum Congregationes.

first arise; they did with much judgment and authority charge the same to be a *Schism*, a formal, full, and most eminent Schism. *Aretius* tells us, the word *Schism* did remain

remain in the Church, that by it might be noted those that separated from publike concord and study of peace, and constituted private Assemblies, as do the Anabaptists, the only disturbing Sect in his days. And the London-Presbyters before-mentioned do well expostulate the Church-gathering Independents; If, say they, the Apostle call those divisions of the Church of Corinth, wherein Christians did not separate into divers formed Congregations of several communion in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper (1 Cor. 1. 10.) schisms, may not your secessions from us, and profession that you cannot join with us, and your setting up Congregations of another communion be more properly called Schism? The Greek word for Schism, signifieth rending; and sure it is, that you rend your selves from us, with a dislike of us, and protestation that you cannot join with us. You renounce all Church-communion with us; you gather Churches out of our Churches; and you set up Churches in an opposite way to our Churches; and all this you do voluntarily, not separated, but separating (*non fugati sed fugitivi*) and unwarrantably, not having any sufficient cause for it; and notwithstanding all this, you acknowledge us to be true Churches of Jesus Christ,

Vindication of Presbyt. pa. 113.

and Churches with which Christ holds communion. May we not therefore justly charge you as guilty of making a schism in the Body of Christ? Division being the *forma infurmans* of Schism; that division in a Church should only be called Schism, and division from a Church, by causeless, unwarrantable separation, not come under that appellation, is but one Doctor's Opinion; though otherwise a Learned one; yet in this apparently acted by the state of the gathered Churches, to restrain Schism as much as ever the Fathers, and other Divines by the special occasion of its use, was acted to extend

Schisma à scindendo dicitur, est scissio, separatio, disjunctio unionis illius, quæ debet inter Christianos observari: quia autem hæc scissio, maxime perficitur & apparet in debita communione Ecclesiastica recusanda: idcirco illa separatio per appropriationem singularem rectè vocatur Schisma. Ames.

it. The grave Casuist, most tender in the case of separation from the Church, hath, considering the formality of Schism, determined, separation from Church-communion is by peculiarity called Schism, because separation from the Church may arise and spring from lust and sensuality, as that mentioned by the Apostle Jude ver. 19. may set up disorder, as did those in the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. 5. 14. and end in apostacy from the Faith, as did some of them who for-

forsook the assembling of themselves together, *Heb. 10. 25.* that therefore it should not be judged *Schism*, whilst division doth appear the *form thereof*, can only be the fancy of such, who to justify the busie promotion of Church-work, resolve a *nullity on the Churches of England by merit*; as if desert were present execution; and *personal rejection*, as if that were the *formality of Excommunication*, not only of *Persons*, but *Churches* also: leaving therefore the word, and considering the thing, we say,

Owen's Schism, Cap.
7. §. 18.

Schism in its general nature, is *division, to the disturbance of the Peace and Order of the Church*; existing in the Church by *different* (not Opinions, which may be Heresie, but) *expressions by word or act*, against Love, Peace, Union, and Order of Society; and most eminently, by an *unwarrantable and voluntary separation from the due communion of any true Church, in which the Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship are truly administered, unto the salvability of the souls thereunto subjected, and retaining Christ's Symbolical Presence.*

This sense of Schism is agreed amongst all Divines, except the one before-mentioned, who yet himself condemns *causeless* *sepa-*

separation, though he will not have it called by the name of *Schism*; and making a nullity to the Church, by personal rejection of it, maketh separation unpracticable and impossible, a *non ens*: for who can ever be convicted of causeless separation, that may plead his *due rejection of the Church*, and leaving the communion of it, becomes exempt from all Jurisdiction, and may *ad libitum*, gather a new Church.

Separation from the Church, is by some distinguished into *partial* and *total*; by others

Schisma aliud est ut loquuntur in scholis negativum quod non exit in cœtum aut societatem aliquam religiosam, sed simpliciter est recessio, & subductio, & non instituitur Ecclesia. Camer. de Schis. p. 402.

into *negative* and *positive*, both which on the matter, do signifie the same thing, when any separate in any *point of Doctrine*, or *act of Communion*, and recede from the particular participation of *such act* ministred, possessing their souls in *peace*, and not expressing by *word or act*, other than a *quiet recess* from the Communion in that particular case, and duly attending *all other public Ministrations* in and to the Church, not instituting counter-Churches, this is called a *partial or negative separation*, and cannot be

Secessio partialis, sit licita tantum quatenus communio non potest absq; peccato exerceri. Ames.

be acquitted from the charge and guilt of *Schism*, in its *nature*, though not *degree*, unless done upon a most *certain cause*, and *clear reason*, some *natural* or *moral* barr, sickness, or violent restraint, or sin by some personal act, or attendance on some false Worship, such as is *sacrificing to Idols*, *invocation of Saints*, and the *sacrificing the Eucharistical Elements*, with a fancied *transubstantiation for the quick and dead*, and the like, wherein the Church in common is concerned in the profession of the Lord, and presenting Worship to him.

Separation *total* or *positive*, is when men *break off from the Church*, renouncing her as not fit for communion; and so denying *all communion with her*, and making Head against the Church, gather and constitute new Churches, which they consociate and draw into distinct Bodies, setting up a Church against a Church, and celebrating the Worship and Ordinances of God, in opposition and contradistinction to the Church from which they withdraw, which the Antients have

Schisma positivum fit cum instituitur Ecclesia, consociatio ut ante.

Secedendi occasio est levis nisi inciderit intolerabilis persecutio ille cœtus unde fit secessio laboret hæresi aut vero deditus sit, idololatriæ, aut agnitus fuerit, sit Antichristus. v. Cam. de Schis. 399. 405.

ever

Eye-Saints
ever called the *building an Altar against an Altar*; and this hath ever been justly judg-

Secessio totales, cum
adhibita absoluta re-
nuntiatione, aut reje-
ctione omnis commu-
nionis non potest lici-
te adhiberi erga Ec-
clesiam veram.

ed *Schism* eminent, not
justifiable without very
great cause, as *Idolatry*,
general prevalence of *He-
resie*, the very *Dominion*
of *Antichrist*, saith the
judicious *Cameron*; not,

whilst the Church is a true Church, saith the
grave *Casuist* upon the conside-
Amesius. ration of the word *Schism*; and

the nature of the *thing* we cannot but ob-
serve; they who *make a division to the di-
sturbance* of the Peace and Order of the
Church; they who having *been in union*
with the true Church of Christ, and any
particular Assembly thereof; if they *deny*
communion with that Church, in due subje-
ction to the Ministrations of Christ the
Mediator; *voluntarily* of their own accord,
not thereunto constrained by *violence* and
force, or other *natural necessity*; and on
an *unwarrantable* ground or reason, the in-
evitable contraction of *guilt*, or *non-existence*
of Gods true Worship (the only Moral
barr to such communion), they fall into the
guilt of Schism; more especially, when on
such non-communion they *constitute new*
and *contradistinct Assemblies*, wherein to
celebrate

celebrate the Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship. These, and none but these, we judge the *subjects* of this black guilt of Schism. For

Divided Opinions not disturbing the Peace and Order of the Church.

Separation, if not from the Church, but from the *World*, out of *which* the Saints are called.

Separation on *just grounds*, and warrantable cause, *natural* or *moral*, as sickness, persecution, cessation of Christ's true Worship, or sin in the participation of it.

Non-communication with particular Assemblies, to which we never stood related, and with which we cannot orderly and ordinarily communicate in their solemn publike Ministrations, are not a Schism, but passionately and unjustly so reputed.

That therefore we may, as plainly as we can, clear up this case of Schism, to the state and condition of the Church in which God hath cast our lot, I shall adventure to note unto you *some carriages of Christians in and towards the Church*, which according to mens mistakes, misapprehensions, prejudice, passions, and prevailing-Interests, are ordinarily branded with this odious *imputation of Schism*, and under the same represented hateful to the world, and
to

to be abhorred as acts in enmity to the Peace and Order of the Church, when in truth they have *not tendency* thereunto, but in due order pursue the *knowledge of the truth*, the *discharge of duty*, the *edification of the Church*, and consequently the *establishment of its Peace and Order*; and therefore I negatively note, these acts (and acts of this nature) are not Schism, though by some unjustly charged and scandalously reputed so to be.

First, To renounce a special relation to, and dependance on the Separation from Rome Church of Rome, as necessary to salvation, is not no Schism.

Schism: For Rome is not (as she fondly affects to be accounted) the *Catholick Church*; but only, and at the best, a *particular Church*, to whom relation must be had according as conveniency will admit it. That *Catholick* common to all Churches and Christians in relation to Christ's *Catholick Church*, should be only attributed to, and predicated of the Church of Rome, none sober, and not studious to extend an *Ecclesiastical Empire*, dare affirm. The *Catholick Headship* of the *Roman Bishop*, is a *Tyrannical fancy*, such as all Nations in Christendom have justly resisted, and all Christians may well laugh at. *Catholick* was never

never appropriated to any particular Church, so as to necessitate special relation to, and peculiar dependance on it as to salvation : and that *Rome* should arrogate the same to her self, and engross that appellation, there is no reason. The *Churches* which were before *Rome* was Christianized ; the *Church of the East* which existed contemporarie with *Rome's* first reception of the Christian Faith, did not know any special relation to, or dependance on the Church of *Rome*, as necessary to salvation, or any way a duty ; yet were they not charged with Schism. As to *Rome's* pretences of *England* receiving the Faith from them, were it true, which cannot be proved, it is an argument of no force to prove them peculiarly, solely Catholick : for the Faith may be propagated by and from particular Churches, to whom relation and dependance is not necessary to salvation. *The Law came out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* The first Christian Church from whence the Faith was propagated to the World, was that of the Jews. The first Church where the Disciples were first called *Christians*, was *Antioch*. Why were not these peculiarly predicated Catholick, and relation to them made necessary to salvation? At *Alexandria Strumentius* was ordained Bishop

Bishop of the *Indians*; were the christianized *Indians* bound on the account of *salvation*, to keep a subject dependance on the Church of *Alexandria*?

Rome being at the best but a particular Church, personal communion with her in the Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship becomes impossible to other People and Nations: and special relation to, and dependance on her, being unnecessary, and wholly groundless, the removing thereof cannot be a Schism.

But again, *Rome* is no more a true (that is pure) Church, than she is *Catholick*. What ever is granted to her essence, as a Church of Christ, it is apparent that she hath made defections from, and alterations in, yea of the Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship; so as that Christ cannot be truly and only adored, and *salvation* obtained in communion with her. What serious Soul observing *Merits* professed unto supererogation; *Saints* made joint Mediators with our blessed Saviour; and the Mediation of Him subjected to the commands of the Virgin *Mary*; *Sacraments* turned into expiatory *Sacrifices*; and the *Sacramental* forms destroyed by the induction of real substance; Ministrations in an unknown Language; and many the like blasphemous notions

notions and acts professed in the Church of Rome, and thinks that communion with her thus subverting the very Mediatorship of Christ, can be *necessary* or *lawful*? If we allow her to sit in the *Temple of God*; Let her purge out the Idolatries and Abominations informing the very *Antichrist*, and *spiritual Babylon*, and then she may with more reason charge Schism on such, whose present separation from her is Duty, and justly to be defended.

And yet again: Separation from Rome is *constrained*, not only by the corruptions innovated and abounding in her, and which are incompetible with the Mediatorship of Christ; but also by the *violence of the Persecution* with which the subjection to, and reception of such horrid Evils are enforced: Curses by Bell, Book, and Candle-light, Fire and Faggot attend all that receive not their Creed, and own not the Ministrations of Worship, directly destructive to the Mediatorship of Christ thereby to be exhibited. I cannot but allow

Bishop Hall's Plea, *Thou* Hall's Noah's Dove, pag. 517.
invite us to feast; you present us with fair Apples, but there is in them venomous Worms; Good Wine, but in it poisonous Spiders; these are not nutritive, but destructive. We would pick out the ve-

R

nomous

noxious Worms, and take out the *Spider*; you deny us this liberty: you smite us with the fist, and by violence constrain us to *certain inevitable ruin*, or to run from your fellowship; and then falsely charge us with uncharitable Separation, and voluntary Schism.

Rome being *no Church* to whom we were necessarily united; The defections of *Rome* destroying the due *Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship*; and the violence of *Rome* driving the desirous of her Reformation from her with the greatest cruelty of Persecution imaginable; a renouncing of relation to, and dependance on her, cannot be a *Schism*; but is falsely so reputed, and unjustly charged.

Secondly, To reason against, and to refuse an assent to the *Debates or Determinations of particular Ministers, or the General Councils and Convocations of the*

2.
Non-consent to Decrees of the Church, no Schism.

Officers of the Church, is not *Schism*. Every man must be saved by his own Faith; and must with his own eyes see, in order to his salvation; the *trial of the spirits*

1 John
4. 1.

is a duty charged on every Christian; the best and wisest men are fallible, and may err; and the spirit

Spirit of the Prophets are subject
 to the Prophets: they of Berea Acts 17.
 were not charged with Schism, but com-
 mended as more noble than they of Thessa-
 lonica, for examining the truth of the Do-
 ctrine preached by the Apostles themselves.
 Paphnutius, though a single Priest, was ne-
 ver branded with Schism for reasoning a-
 gainst, and resisting the general inclination
 of the whole Council of Nice, in the case
 of the Marriage of the Clergy. None but
 perfidious and bloody Papists would charge
 Philpot with Schism for
 freely disputing in the
 Convocation, to that end

See his Story in Fox's
 Acts and Monuments.

called by the *Queen's Authority*, which in
 the nature of its self, carried a security to
 every man, with liberty to speak his judg-
 ment and debate it. The Word preached
 is to be received with meekness, and due
 reverence to the Authority by which it is
 exhibited. A reverend regard is to be had
 to *general Opinions*, and *prudent Debates*
 and *Determinations* of the Officers of the
 Church; but neither the one, nor the other,
 must captivate any man's discretion, nor
 muzzle his mouth, when he seeth Truth op-
 pressed with the prevalency of Error, and
 the Authority of the Church; but every
 man in union with the *Catholick Body*, is

bound in this case according to his capacity to communicate his knowledge to the edification of the whole. They then who stomach private Christians Enquiries into the verities of Doctrines publicly delivered, and charge *Schism* on the Logical and free ratiocination of any single and obscure person, against Universities, Convocations, and General Councils of the Church, who yet deny not to hold communion with the Church; do appear plainly to mistake the *nature of Schism*: for such disputation is the just liberty appertaining to all the Members of the Church, which is modestly on all occasions, for the ventilation and vindication of truth, to be acted according to every mans capacity.

Thirdly, To *repine under, and soberly reprove the growing corruptions of the Church,*
 3. *To be offended at Ceremonies, is no Schism.* and disorderly Ministrations of Divine Worship, or the *super-added Ceremonies of Religion*, is no Schism. Every Member of the Church must be jealous of her defilements, disorder, and defection, and must mourn under growing-evils, which he cannot mend. It is an hard case when Christian zeal may not express it self against sin, by a *sigh*, a shaking of the head, or soft reproof, but

but it must be damped with the imputation of Schism. Who will charge the *Israelites* with Schism, whilst they did bring their Offerings before the Lord, because with *grieved souls* they *loathed* and *reproved* the rude Ministrations of the Sons of *Eli*? Our Saviour lived in constant communion with the Church of the *Jews*, but was ever grieved with, and invective against the *Traditions* and *super-added Ceremonies* of the Elders, which made the *word of God* of *none effect*: Will any therefore lay Schism to his charge. *Augustine* was well known to have been the Mall of the *Schismaticks* of his Age, yet he was grieved at the *number* and *nature* of *Ceremonies* super-added to the Worship of God; especially what seemed *Sacramental*; and though by *scandal* or *offence* of some *holy*, and other *turbulent persons*, he durst not speak so freely against them, he hath duly declared *their evil*, and his own *offence* taken at them: Yet who

Quod instituitur, ut quasi observatio Sacramenti sit, etiam si multa hujusmodi, propter nonnullarum vel sanctarum vel turbulentarum scandala devitanda liberius improbare non audeo; hoc tamen nimis doleo multa quæ in divinis libris minus curantur, & tam multis præsumptionibus plena sunt omnia ipsam religionem, quam paucissimis & manifestissimis celebrationum Sacramentis misericordia Dei esse liberam voluit ostendibus servilibus, & humanis præsumptionibus premant. *Aug. Epist. 119. ad Januar.*

THE SAINTS CASE
ever charged him with Schism for so doing? It is a poor defence of *disorder, corruption, or innovation*, to charge the *mourning* (which the Angel of God must mark, *Ezek. 9.*) of *modest sober Christians*, who constantly hold *communion* with the Church, and attend the *Ministrations* of his Worship in the same, with *Schism*; only, because sometimes their *Tongue* expresseth the *grief of their soul*; and a due reproof of such *disorders or innovations* which they bear, and cannot mend. Schism thus charged speaketh more of passion, than judgment in the Accuser.

Fourthly, A *reluctancy under the Forum, or Court of the Church,*

To dislike ^{4.} the *Constitutions of the Court of the Church*, is no Schism. *its Constitutions and Operations, is not a Schism.*

The Church, and the Court of the Church, are different and distinct each from other, as I have before noted. The Church is the adequate object of *communion*, and always so abides; but the *Court of the Church* may be changed, and as to its constitution and operation, alter. That the Court of the Church always consist of *Ministers, Officers of the Church*, it is necessary; but yet among these a *Diotrephes, loving to have the prebeminency*, may sometime exalt himself against

against Apostolical Power, Counsel, and Authority; and not receive the Brethren, but unduly cast them out of the Synagogue, for which he is rebuked, and may with grief be remembered by the people of God, who with trouble at such usurpation and carriage, hold their communion with the Church.

The *Synedrion* and governing Court of the Church of the Jews, was in the days of our Saviour much degenerated from its *pristine*, and *pure constitution* by the Lord: Their *High-Priests* sometimes were the *Princes*, and the *Court of the Church* too much confounded with the *Temporal or Civil Court*, and concerned in *Civil Affairs*:

and the *High-Priest*, who by God's appointment was to continue during life, came to be changed often, if not every year:

and this Court grew unto a very great excess of *Tyranny* over the people of God, binding on them *burdens* which they were not able to bear; and casting them out of the Synagogues for the *non-observance of their own Traditions*, without warrant from God's word; yea many times for the *discharge of duty*.

Munus Pontificis cum venale erat ad varios transfertur homines, præter legis Præscriptionem. Cal.

Quem morem ipsorum ambitio contra legem invexerat. Grot.

These our Saviour, as well as others, who lived in communion with that Church, did often complain against, as *an evil almost intolerable*; yet were not therefore charged or to be charged with *Schism*, because they so did: and no sober man who knoweth any thing in Ecclesiastical Story, can or will deny that the Court of the Christian Church, by the *working*, and unto the *manifestation of the Man of Sin*; did degenerate from its *first constitution*, and the *Schisms* which were among *Presbyters*, gave occasion to the advancing of *one* to be *chief* amongst them, whom yet for some time the *Collegium Presbyterorum* awed so much, that he might scarcely act any thing without

Vide Cyprians Epi-
stles.

them: yet at length the preferred *Presbyter*, obtained *Jurisdiction*, and some *special operation*, though in the nature of it common to every *Presbyter*; so that he excluding the *Presbyters*, acted alone, or at least in *distinction from*, and *prebeminency* above his fellows; until it grew into question whether a *Bishop* were not an *Order of Ministry* distinct from a *Presbyter*, having a superiority, not of *prebeminency* only, but also of *perfection of action*, as the Schools state it.

This first change grew more in the Court
of

of the Churches, unto the advancing of Arch-bishops, Patriarchs, and Pope; and the Court of the Church hath not only thus altered from its first constitution, which some have always in all Ages born ill in the Church, resisted, and desired to be reformed, who yet never made separation from the publike Ministrations in and to the Church: but the same hath acted many times very *proudly, tyrannically, and unjustly* towards the Church, and *lorded it over God's Heritage*, injoining Ceremonies, innovating things into Religion, and censuring the Members of the Church on light, if not *unjust grounds* and causes; and have acted such *irregularities*, that could not but constrain the complaints of serious Christians, and an out-cry for *Reformation*, in them who yet would not therefore run from the communion of the

Church. It is worth remembrance, the Council of Trent were much displeased at *Michael Medina* for charging *Aerius, Augustine, and Jerome*,

Commovit haud parum auditores ejus dicti audacia quod Hieronymus & Augustinus Heretice sensissent. Con. Trid. Lib. 7. p. 417.

with a *Schism*, or in their dialect *Herésie*, for affirming the *parity of Order between Bishop and Presbyter*, in the primitive institution of the Ministry, as *rash, foolish, vain, and ground*.

groundless; for under a debate concerning this matter, the communion might be held: and St. *Augustine* that grand Opposite to *Schism*, was not afraid of falling under that *guilt*, when observ-

Hoc nimis doleo, quod multa quæ in divinis libris saluberrima præcepta sunt, minus curantur: & tam multis præsumptionibus sic plena sunt omnia, ut graviter corripitur qui per ataxais suas terram nudo pede tetigerit, quam qui mentem vinolentia sepe lacerit. *Epist. Jan. ar. 119.*

ing the exorbitant motion, and undue operation of the governing Power, Part, or Court of the Church, he professed it to grieve him very much, that *the things of God were neglected*, and *all things were filled with Ceremonies*; and the ne-

glect of a Ceremony was more severely punished, than Drunkenness. Whilst Bodies Politick are subject to corruption, it can be no Schism for the Members in sense thereof, to reject and strive against it, lest it prevail to the ruin of the Body. It is no *Schism* for any Member to affect the whole man, of a distorted motion of any the Organs of the whole Body. It is a *scrupulosity* without reason, that we cannot communicate with the Church, because the Government of the Church is changed in some circumstances of order from its first constitution; and the Governours of the Church do act with pride, cruelty, and injustice towards the

the

the Members of the Church: all which may be the Peoples sorrow and burden, but cannot be their sin; they having not a power in their hands to help the one, or the other; and under both, the *Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship* are to them dispensed in truth, though not in the purity, and with the pleasure desirable. And it is a censure exceeding rash, and without ground, that because men complain of, and strive against innovations into, the alterations of, or the undue operations by the Court of the Church; therefore to charge them with Schism, and reproach all desires and endeavours of reformation of so great abuses, as the dissatisfied actings of restless Schismatics. Innovation in Government, subversion of first Constitutions in any Bodies Politick, and Tyrannical ministration of just Authority, is better guarded by the imputation of Sedition to the subjects sensible of the same, than the charge of Sedition cleared by this Argument; they cannot be content, the Government and Governours, act how they list, can ever make a conviction of so black a charge. Sober and wise men know how to distinguish between the subject and its adjuncts; the Family and Servants, in due order, in and towards the Family; and know, that defects, disorder, alterations; and

and *male ministrations* of the Court, is no warrant for *Sedition* in the Commonwealth, or *Schism* in the Church; both which abide *whole, entire*, and the *adequate object* of communion; and that they who maintain such *communion*, may in sense of such *mis-carriage* of the Court, fearing and feeling the sad influences thereof, be *grieved*, and *complain*, and in their places *endeavour* the *prevention* or *amendment* thereof, without any *Schism* or *Sedition*.

Fifthly, To repair to places of common use, for the celebration of solemn Religious Worship, is not *Schism*. Places purposely designed, and reserved for Religious Exercises, are exceeding

5.
To celebrate Religion in common places, is no *Schism*.

ing *useful and convenient*: but *holy places* was a part of positive Worship under the *Law*, and is removed, and ceased under the *Gospel*. Our Saviour in his resolution to the Woman of *Samaria*, Neither John 4. in this *Mountain*, nor in *Jerusalem*, hath discharged the holiness of places, and made all *common*. For men wilfully, and without good cause, to go from their *Parish-Churches*, and in opposition to them, to creep into private *Houses*, looks something like *Separation*, and giveth suspicion of *Schism* for that not the Place but

but the *Assembly* (as is before noted) seemeth to be *forsaken*: but in cases of *necessity*, as in times of *Persecution*, Woods, Groves, Caves, or Dens, to the Primitive Christians; and in case of *common Conflagration of Churches*, which our eyes have seen, *publick Halls*, or *private Houses*, without any solemnity of *consecration of the place*, (a thing the Gospel knoweth not) may be *the places of solemn assembly*, in which the Word may be preached, Prayers be made, Sacraments administred, and all acts of Divine Worship to Christ our Mediator, may be celebrated, is confessed by all. We hope therefore none will be so passionate as to charge a *Schism*, on this only reason, *Men resort to places not consecrated, nor set apart for an holy use*; they run to, and preach in *private Houses*: but consider the lawfulness of *holy Ministrations in all places*, and the necessity of the places now resorted to, whilst the places appointed thereto lye in their ashes.

Sixthly, To retire to private places for private Acts of Religion, is no *Schism*. God is to be worshipped by *Families apart*, and he will pour out his wrath on the *Families that call not on his Name*: And all men must needs

6.
Domestick Religion no Schism.

Zech. 12. 14.
Jer. 10. 25.

needs allow the Master of the Family a right of receiving friends and neighbours into his House for Religious as well as Civil communion; when they may pray together, and confer together the things of God. The good old Puritans (so called) were accustomed duly to resort to Church, and attend the publick solemn Worship twice a day, and with much zeal withstood the separation of the Brownists; but yet the publick Worship of the Sabbath being finished, and past, they retired to their own Houses; it may be some two or three Families to one, and spent sometime in conference, reading, singing, repeating the Sermons preached, and praying together; for this some passionately charged them with Schism, and suspected them as holding Conventicles against the

35 Elizab.
Cap. 1.

Church; yet the severest Laws made against Sectaries and unlawful Conventicles, did acknowledged a domestick liberty in Exercises of Religion, and secured it to those who duly repaired to Church, and attended the Divine Service; and when the imprudence of some made these private Conventions over-numerous, and brought on them an aspect of tumult, and suspicion of danger to the Republick, occasioned Laws to prevent such danger; yet these most severe Laws do regulate

gulate and restrain domestick liberty in Family-Religion, not deny or remove the same: it remaineth lawful for the *Family*, with *some friends*, to serve God in and by acts of Religion proper to them. Whilst good men hold the *publike communion of the Church*, it can be no good ground to charge them with *Schism*, that they hold *Conventicles in their Houses*, and exercise Religion in their *Families* to and with their Friends, which they lawfully may, and indeed all sober men acknowledg must do.

Considering then that Schism is a *voluntary and groundless separation* from the communion of a *true Church*, I conclude;

To *separate from Rome* is no Schism; she is not a Church to be communicated with: there is most just reason for separation from her, and we are thereunto driven by violent persecution.

To *stand up and dispute against the Debates, Decrees, and Determinations of the Convocation or Council of the Church*, is no Schism, for that communion in acts of Worship are continued. Discretion is *sui juris* the liberty of every man; and every member is bound to minister his judgment, and speak his mind unto the edification of the Church, in things concerning it debated.

To *sigh, and be sensibly affected with Innovations*

novations in God's Worship, and super-added Ceremonies, is no Schism, whilst communion with the Church is held: for although the substance of Worship be preserved, and exist entire under such super-added Innovations; yet they are displeasing to God, dishonourable to Religion, and therefore cannot but be grievous to every devout Soul: Who cannot reform the Church, must mourn under the evils of it.

To see and speak against the constitution and ministration of the Forum or Court of the Church, is no Schism: for communion with the Church is yet held, and the defections and disorders of Governours may be lawfully observed, and modestly blamed by private subjects.

To serve God with solemn Worship in places of common use, is no Schism: for it is the Assembly, not the Place, maketh the Church; and holiness of places is a stranger to the Gospel.

To serve God in private Families, with a society of Friends and Neighbours in private Exercises of Religion, is not a Schism: for these ought to be done, and the communion of the Church not left undone; and Family-Religion tends to the edification of the Church, is not destructive to its Peace and Order, but every way consistent with it.

CAP.

C A P. VIII.

Examining some Grounds and Reasons of separation from the Church; and shewing them to be weak and insufficient to acquit the Subjects from the guilt of Schism.

I Have in a serious Swasion of your care to keep communion with Christ's true Church, presented you with the *sinfulness of Schism*; the formal and common guilt of causeless *non-communication*, and *groundless separation*: And because some too passionately impute *Schism* to any who *dislike any thing*, though innovated into the Church, and unjustly imposed on it, who yet under their *just offence and grief*, with sedulity keep *communion*, and study to preserve the *union of the Church*: I have noted several cases wherein *Schism* is too *rashly charged*; and endeavoured to acquit those to whom it is imputed, from so great a guilt.

That some in these last Ages of the Church and World, have made not only *Schism*, division, disorder, disturbance, and confusion *in the Church*, (to the avoiding of which guilt, they leaping out of the Church will needs suppose this only to be the forma-

lity of Schism) but also made dreadful separations *from the Church visible*, in the severest manner, and highest degree, ever known in the Christian World, since *Schism* was used to note a *peculiar sin*, all Christians cannot but run and read. How many run from the *particular Churches* to which they were once related, with which they have sometimes had close and sweet communion; wherein they have said, and supposed themselves *converted and edified in the faith of Christ*; and which they have conceded, and dare not yet deny to be *true Churches of Christ*, in which salvation is to be had; and that with greatest *violence, rigor, severity*, and *uncharitable censures* that are imaginable; who liveth and seeth not? And have proceeded unto the *unchurching* of those very Assemblies; renouncing *all relation to them*, refusing *all communion* with them; and resolving a *nullity*, a *non-entity* on them, by their very *rejection of them*; and gathered *new Assemblies*, constituted *new Churches*, in a direct opposition and contradistinction to them; professing *themselves* and their *new Assemblies* to be the *only Churches of Christ*, calling all others unto them *from other stated Assemblies* where the Mediatorship of Christ is truly administred, as from the *World*, unto them

them as the only *Body of Christ*; not only confronting Authority in their undue and illegal *Conventions*; but also breaking all order in, and *unity* with the Church, and Assemblies thereof, in the most *full* and *formal manner* ever known since the Gospel of Christ was preached in the World, building *an Altar* against the Altar of the Lord.

Read my Saints
zeal against sin-
ful Altars.

Whether separation from the Church (which the only Advocates thereof, contrary to the *signification* of the word, *nature* of the thing, and *interpretation* of all Divines ancient and modern, do deny) be a *Schism*, we will not now dispute again. It is fully granted by those themselves who are most *conspicuous in separation from the Church*, That such separation may be a blameable departure from the Church; an *unwarrantable relinquishment* of communion with them; a *causeless recess* from them; and a most grievous sin, more vile than *Schism*, according to their sense of it (which yet themselves yeeld to be a grievous guilt) viz. *Apostacy* (the usual event of *Schism*), *Impulsivity* (the impulsive cause) or *irregular walking* (the occasion of *Schism*), is evident to all that can understand what they

Dr. Owen's Schif.
Cap. 2.

write or profess; laying a necessity on all the *subjects of separation*, to look well to the *Grounds* and *Reasons* on which they refuse *communion*, and leave the *fellowship of the Church*, to which they once stood related: for if the *Grounds* be not *warrantable*, and *Reasons* of *weight*, such separation is on all hands concluded to be exceeding sinful. Whilst you find us willing to acquit *such* from the imputation of guilt, on whom it is evident that it is unjustly charged; I hope you will not be angry, if we stay upon suspicion *such* whom we see *receding*, not only from some particular acts of communion (which must have its reasons to justify it), but *refusing all communion with the Church*, which they lately owned, as related to it; and *running into* what (according to our apprehension of the word and thing) is *Schism*; not only *negative* and *partial*, but also *positive* and *total*; setting up the Worship of God in *counter-assemblies* and Churches, self-constituted, and contradistinct to the Church with which they lately held, and contended men should hold communion; and that we a little reason with them the reasons alledged for *such* their *separation*, which we conceive *weak* and *insufficient*, making no *warrantable* barr to their communion with, on
ground

ground for separation from the Church; and as to what we have observ'd pleaded, let me with freedom tell them:

First, *Ignorance of the first constitution, gathering, and founding the Church, is no warrantable*

I. Ignorance of first constitution, no ground for separation.

barr to communion with, or ground of separation from the Church. So long as the Church doth exist true in its *essential form*, it is the adequate object of our communion, which cannot be denied on this only ground or reason, We know not *that the Church was at first truly founded, well constituted, and rightly gathered*, according to the Mind of Christ, and Apostolical Order. For,

The Church may have been truly founded, rightly gathered, and the *particular members not know the same*. I supposing the language of *New-England* to be best understood by the men who on this reason stumble at communion with our Churches, will present them with Mr.

Cotton's Expostulation concerning this pretence; and

Cotton of Infant-Baptism, p. 186.

he thus pleadeth: *To say the Church of England never had any true constitution, is a rash and false speech: rash, for can you say it? Or do you know it because you were*

then born? as God questioneth with Job in another case, Job 38. 21. Or have you found such a matter by reading ancient Records and Stories, if you dare credit them? as doubtless they are more worthy of credit that lived near those times, and had the view of those ancient Records, than some of your later Books, who speak either out of partiality to Rome, as the Jesuits; or out of prejudice to the state of the Church of England, as the rigid Separatists: Those Antients Records will tell you, that England received the Faith of Christ from Joseph of Arimathea, and Simon Zelotes, and others of those Primitive and Apostolick Saints, who doubtless planted Churches not after the pattern of Antichrist, but after the manner of the Apostles: therefore to say,

Cotton's way of
the Churches,
p. 111.

the Churches of England never had a true constitution, is not only rash, but false; for the Churches of England were rightly gathered and planted at the first. The first gathering of the Church, is by the return of time worn out of sight; but their *existency* in the true Ministrations of the Mediator, and *subsistency* under so great storms of temptation as hath beaten on them, is a good evidence (though *à posteriori* after the fact done) that they were at first well founded on the Rock, duly implanted

in the Stock Christ Jesus, who hath ever since born them up against the very Gates of Hell; and made them in all Ages fruitful unto this very day, notwithstanding the Winter-blasts by which they have been often nipped. Histories, the best evidence of ancient Acts, do assure us, the Churches in England were planted by Apostles, or Apostolical men, who knew how, and (without all doubt) did with all care settle them on a sure foundation, and plant them in due order: and if we may judg the certainty of the Root, and the due order of planting the same, by the extent and fertility of the branches; the stability and good order of the foundation, by the dimensions and duration of the Fabrick, will not the constant and successive Professions of Christ's Name, by most eminent Martyrs and Professors, under the greatest of Persecution, and most exquisite torments, enjoying and subjected to the Ministrations of

See Fox Acts and Monuments, producing the testimonies of Gildas, Tertullian, Origen, Beda, & alios, lib. 2.

After the Britans received the Faith of Christ, they never forsook it neither for any manner of false preaching, nor for any torments, or yet assaults by the Pains: and thus it seemeth to me, the Britans among other Nations, have been as it were by the special election of God called to be the Church of God. Wal. Brute his Answer to the Bishop of Hereford.

Christ the Mediator, *holding forth the testimony of truth* in and under the greatest defections; *militating unto Bonds and Blood* for Christ their *Head*, against *Pagan* and *Papal* Antichrists, until the Reformation made the same again conspicuous in, and to the whole World; plainly demonstrate, that *these Churches* were at first *rightly gathered*, and *truly constituted*? None are so void of reason as to say, The *old House*, which sheltereth them now, and for many Ages past sheltered their Predecessors in, and against the fury and tempest of many black storms, was not well framed and founded at the first, because the *foundation is with time grown out of sight*: Or conclude the *aged Vine* which duly buddeth, and yearly yeeldeth largest Bunches of fairest Grapes, was not well planted, because the *Root lieth out of sight*. Will any be so irrationally irreligious, as to say or suppose *Albanus*, *Julius*, *Aaron*, *Amphibolus*, and those many Christians which bare up the Testimony of Jesus under the raging most violent storms of the Ten first Persecutions under *Dioclesian*, who destroyed their *Churches*, and burned their Books of *holy Scriptures*; and *Wickliff*, *Brute*, *Lambert*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, and those many who in a series of suffering, and succession of profession, against the Antichristian

stian violence, propagated the truth of Christ's Mediatorship; were Beams of an House not *rightly founded*, and Branches of a Vine not *rightly planted*. It is a good convincing-query presented by the sober *Non-conformists* to the old *Brownists*, and late *Congregationalists*, who question the being of the Church in the truth of its constitution; In *what Church were ye converted? Was it not in the Assemblies from which ye now separate*, as questioning their very existency as the Church of Christ? *If ye once saw Christ walking among us*, How is it that ye say we are not fitly framed, the Building of God?

Hilder sham's Letter in defence of the Ministry, and against Separation.

Ball against Can.

Lond. Min. Vindicat.

Again, To know the manner of gathering, the order of first planting, the method of first constituting the Church, is not necessary to the communion of the Church. That the Church is and doth exist subjected to the Ministrations of the Mediator, is necessary to be known; but how it came to be a Church, after what manner it was gathered, in what order it was first constituted, is not necessary to be known in order to communion with the Church. What Mad-man will make it necessary to his Habitation, to know the

the Foundation of the House was orderly laid? Sufficeth it not to see the Fabrick firmly fixed, duly compacted, and orderly disposed for habitable use? Who will refuse to partake of the Fruit of the Vine, until he know it was rightly planted at the first? If men see it bud and bring forth Grapes, do they not pluck and feed on the same with freedom, who never know nor think themselves bound to enquire when and how this Vine was planted? The Scriptures do no where direct the knowledge of *first Constitution*, as necessary to Souls communion with the Church. The Apostles never preached, never practised such a *qualification* of Church-members: God added to the Church daily such as should be saved; and there was no demurr or delay to their *union*, that yet knew not that the Church was *rightly constituted at the first*. Paul joined himself to the Church; *Priscilla* and *Aquila* in their travels conso- ciated with the Churches where they so- journed, without any enquiry *how they were gathered*, how they were first constituted: Many weak men cannot come to know how *the Church was gathered at the first*, who can experience *edification* in it. Time hath laid the foundation out of sight; it is only obvious to Faith, by Historical Report and
Con-

Consequence, which some weak capacities stumble at, and cannot allow.

The Church is planted in *persons*, but propagated by *posterity*. It is not planted for *an Age*; gathering Churches is not the work of *every Generation*: This did indeed begin the *Acts of the Apostles*; but must it needs in all places run to the *end of the Revelation*, and continue till Christ come to judgment? Is there no such thing as *edification of the Church*, militation *against the powers of the World, and Gates of Hell, growing to perfection*? Or is the age of Christ's Church the *age of a Man*, that Church-gathering must needs be the work of every Generation? All this is to be supposed, if the knowledg of first gathering and constitution, be necessary to communion with the Church. Whilst the Church doth truly *subsist* in it self, and duly *exist* to us a *Church of Christ* in its essential form, and thereby appeareth to have been at the first rightly constituted, duly gathered, and orderly framed; and the knowledg of such first constitution is not charged on us as a duty, nor necessary to our communion. To *deny communion on this ground*, to separate from such Assemblies, and to resort unto *self-constituted Congregations*, on this reason, cannot be warrantable; nor acquitted from Schism.

Schism. Such as make this plea, must needs conclude the duration of the Church to be but for *one Age*, and Church-gathering to be the *resurrection of it to every succeeding Age* of the World; which if neglected by the carelessness, looseness, or prophaneſs of men (worſe in every after-age), may ſoon root Chriſt's Name and Church *from* off the Earth. Let ſuch as labour among *Infidels*, and plant Churches in *America*, be careful they lay a good Foundation, and ſo conſtitute Churches that they may ſurvive them many after-generations: But as for us, who live and are edified in Churches already gathered, and long ſince conſtituted, which exiſted under, and are recovered from the decays, defections, and Antichriſtian assaults, unto a good degree of reformation; let us know, *Careful, conſtant, conſcientious communion with, not firſt conſtitution and gathering of the Church*, muſt be our ſtudy.

2. Nationality & Parochiality, no ground for ſeparation.

Secondly: The diſtribution of the Church into *National* and *Parochial Aſſemblies*, is not a warrantable ground of ſeparation, and ſufficient reaſon for *relinquiſhment of communion with it*. Many among us dividing from the union of the Church, and denying

ing all communion, are ready to say, *Your Churches are National Churches, and Parochial Churches, and no true Churches: your Parish-Churches are Cages of unclean Birds; and your Parochial Ministers are Parish-Priests, with whom we will have nothing to do. This is the old Plea of the Brownists, and continued with a louder clamour by their off-spring the Independent-Congregationalists; and the same hath been often and abundantly answered by their learned and sober Opponents. I shall therefore only observe to you these things.*

Hollingsworth's Rejoinder to Mr. Eaton and Mr. Taylor, cap. 1. Lond. Min. Divini Jus. Par. 2. Cap. 1.

1. That the *Catholick Church* be distributed into *particular Assemblies*, more or less general, is not only *convenient*, but *necessary*. That all Christians assemble in one place, is impossible; the Ministrations of Christ our Mediator, exist in, and are exhibited to particular Assemblies, and distinct Conventions.

2. The distinction of particular Assemblies of the Church into greater and lesser, is most *conveniently* (in consonance to Scripture, and primitive pattern, and unto greater advantage of edification) done by *local bounds*: Natural and Politick Cir-

Circumscription: the Old Testament doth

In media terra & juxta terminum illius Statua Jehovæ statuetur in testimonium quod addicti sunt cultui Jehovæ & publice profitebuntur doctrinam Evangelii: *Tisca.*

Nations should serve him; *Assur* and *Egypt*, in an open, a publike profession of his Name, and celebration of his Worship,

Hæc loquendi figura significabat propheta, fidem ac religionem publice acturam: & diu mansura non tantquam hospitem perigrinaturam in *Egypto*. Sumpta est similitudo a subjugatione regnorum: huic interpretationi favent res ipsa & nomina. *Forrer.*

abundantly predict the general publike profession of Christ's Name, by the Gentiles, in a *politick capacity* and *combination*, *Psal.* 72. 11, 17. *Isa.* 2. 2. 19. 18, 19, 24, 25. 55. 5.

should be third with *Israel*. This interpretation is favoured by the word and *thing*, saith a Learned Critick. Certainly Nations in their politick constitution, *publikely-professing* true Religion, doth make it *more conspicuous* and convincing to

the ignorant unbelieving World. Although the first Ages of Christianity, not having subjugated Nations in their publike, politick capacity to the Ministrations of the Mediator, giveth us no instance of *National Churches*, under a *National Profession* of, and subjection to the Discipline of the Gospel; yet it doth every where distinguish and denominate Churches, though
of

of many Congregations, and particular Assemblies, by the places which circumscribed the same, and where they did inhabit; as the Church of Jerusalem, Ephesus, and the like, which hath been urged by the late Assembly of Divines, and the late

Assemblies Answer to Reason, p. 66.

Vindication of the Presbyter. Gov. pa. 20, 24.

Jus Divin. Min. lib. 2. cap. 1.

London-Ministers, against the very fomenters of that Schism which yet disturbeth our Peace and Order: well concluding, if Churches may be denominated from Cities, why not by the same reason from Nations? Nor have we any account in all the Primitive times, of other distinction of particular Churches each from other, save the convention in the places of their abode and residence; that of affection, and peculiar relation to this and that particular Pastor; the Church of Paul, of Apollo, and Cephas, did indeed begin to put up its head, but was nipped in the bud, by the Authority and severe censure of the Apostle, who well knew Church-order, the nature of Schism, and distinction of particular Churches, by Rome, Corinth, Colosse, and the place in which the Christians did reside. Many are the advantages of Parochial Churches, distributed into distinct Societies or Assemblies,

blies, by the limits of habitation, both for the more facil *inspection of the Pastor*, more ready and frequent *converse in fraternal-correction*, and the more certain and commodious *convention to Worship*, and public communion; the mischiefs of *Church-relation*, and distinction by *particular Pastors*, and peculiar combination, are very great, by reason of the *dispersion of members*, remotion from *Fraternal and Ministerial inspection*; and an occasion of *Schism* *ministring strife*, and the contempt of others no less *Ministers of Christ*, and *Pastors of the Catholick Church*: So that in comparison of this, *local limitation*, and *Parochial distinction*, must be acknowledged by all serious Christians, and sober men, much more convenient. And yet

The *Nationality* and *Parochiality*, is not *essential to the Church* in the substance of it, and in its constitution, but a *convenient circumstance*, and *separable adjunct*, which may be, and may not be; and yet the *Church be the same*: The Church was before *Nations professed the Name of Christ*, and before *Parishes were known in the world*, and may subsist *when, and where these fail*. A *Church National by speciality*, and *peculiar appropriation*, as was the *Jews*, to whom the *Gentiles* must needs be *profelyted*, enjoying

joying *administrations* from, and to God, by one *National Officer and High Priest*; and relation to the Church, by relation to that Nation; there is, nor can be none under the Gospel: No Nation hath ever been *adopted unto God*, in their Stock, Original, and Progenitors, so as that being the *seed of Abraham*, and sprung from the *loins of Israel*, they must be accounted the people of God, when formed into a distinct Nation of the World. Let none maintain a mistake, and think that *Nationality* and *Parochiality* is so essential to the Church, that an *Infidel*, *Turk*, *Jew*, or *Pagan*, becomes a Member of the Church, *because*, and *by being* made a Denizon, and Naturalized in the Nation; and by living *within the Precincts of the Parish*: No; these are only *circumstances of order*, disposing the Christians in such a Nation, under a *more open profession of Christ*, and *orderly subjection to the ministrations of Discipline*, by one National Convocation of all the particular Pastors of the Churches in that Nation; and a *more ready, speedy, regular, and convenient attendance on the ministrations of Grace and Worship*, on the Lords Day, or at other times, in the *places prepared within their Parishes*, or local limitations.

These things well considered, there can

T

be

be no warrant for *separation*, no justifiable ground for *non-communication* with the Church, that it is *Nationally and Parochially divided*; for that these are not in the *institution of the Church*, nor any way made *essential to it*, or our communion with it; but only a *circumstantial*, though necessary *distribution of the Church*, into greater and lesser Societies, by the most *convenient order* for discipline and communion, that Prudence can direct. They that on this ground separate from the Church, cannot be acquitted from the guilt of Schism: for,

Hales of Schism; faith the Judicious *Hales*,
 pa. 15. When places of publike com-

munion are by due Authority limited according to Rules of *conveniency and order*, it is not lawful for prayer, or hearing, or other religious exercises, to assemble otherwise than is by by publike Order allowed.

And many Grave Divines have determined, That to lose Parochial bounds, would in a little time bring in all manner of *Prophaness and Atheism*.

3. Quondam defection, no cause of Separation.

Thirdly, *Quondam-defection*, and the deluge of *Papery*, the prevalency of *Error*, *Superstition*, and *Idolatry*; the *existency of Antichrist* sometimes in the Church,

Church, to the defacing the Beauty, and almost destruction of the Being of the Church, is no warrant for separation, nor justifiable reason for non-communication with it in its reformed state. Non-entity of the Church, must needs be granted to be a justifiable cause of *Non-communication*: for this cannot be held with those who were a Church, but now are not, but are unchurched, and stand not in relation to God or Christ; nor appear interested in the Covenant of Salvation, and the administrations thereof. Hence, as the Novations of old defended their Schism by pleading the Church of Christ was lost in the Earth, and was to be restored by them. So the separating-Brownists, and Church-ruining Congregationalists, run from the Churches where the Mediatorship of Christ is truly ministred, and determine they are unchurched; the Deluge of Popery hath sometimes overflowed them; Idolatry, Superstition, Antichrist, hath sometime prevailed on them, and they are unchurched, and have lost their being; and that we may be assured of this nullity come on the Church, the grave and grand Advocate for Schism, doth affirm it thus came to pass. *It is said, That true Churches were at first planted in England, How then, or by what means*

Dr. Owen of Schif.
p. 211.

means did they cease to be? How, or by what act did God unchurch them? He answers, They did it themselves *meritoriously*, by Apostacy and Idolatry; God did it *legally*, by his institution of a Law of rejection of such Churches.

In this Plea we find *two things* stated to the unchurching of those Churches which require our communion: 1. The *merit*, Idolatry, Apostacy. 2. The *manner of execution*, A Law of rejection. Let us a little examine them both, and see how far they will warrant separation. And

To the first, The *merit* of being unchurch'd, because of *Idolatry* and *Apostacy*. Let it be observed,

The *matter of fact* cannot be denied; in the prevalence of the Man of Sin, this Church did make too great a *defection from the Ministration of Christ the Mediator*, and run into *superstition and idolatry*; in this respect *blackness hath come on the face of the Church*; and she is too justly reproached by her own Children; whilst those of more discretion do modestly observe, and dutifully mourn in the remembrance of so great defection and deformity. Yet

In that day of *Apostacy* and *Idolatry*, the Church retained its relation to God, and was not by *merit ipso facto unchurch'd*.

Israel

Israel remained Gods Israel, when they deserved to be rejected; Idolatry generally prevailed on them, to the setting up the Image of Jealousie in the Temple of the Lord; yet was the presence of God among them. God hath more of compassion than to cast off his people as soon as they

Though the Churches of England have been corrupted by Antichristian Usurpations and Innovations, yet this doth not cast them into a worse state then the ten Tribes under Jeroboam and his Successors; especially under Ahab and Jezabel, and the time succeeding, when yet God owned them for his Church. Cotton.

deserve a Bill of Divorce; he wooeth their return, he waiteth their return; he willingly accepteth the day of small things; he kindly entertaineth and encourageth first attempts, weak endeavours, and every proceeding in and towards reformation, though it move with much hesitancy and backsliding. The existency of Elias and the Prophets of the Lord, reproving Idolatry and defection, provoking penitential returns and reformation, is the symbol of Divine Presence, the argument of Church-beeing under Israel's defection and merit to be unchurched and cast off by the Lord. So Luther, Hulse, Wickliff, Lambert, Cranmer, the many Martyrs, Ministers, Witnesses against the prevailing-Idolatry of the Church, did evidence its vital existency and relation to

God, in its greatest *defection* from him, by which it deserved to be divorced; by these God *solicited*, and ceased not until he persuaded a *reformation* of this Church, to rejection of *Idols* and *Superstition*, and the restitution of the true Ministrations of the Mediator. So that

The Churches which require our communion, are returned from their *Apostacy*, have repented their *Idolatry*, and reformed those *Antichristian abuses* under which they travelled; and now do subject themselves to the Ministrations of the Mediator, in the *truth* and *simplicity* of his *Institutions*. Now although they deserved to be rejected for their *Apostacy*, yet the Mercies of God will receive her *returning to him again*. Though the general deluge of *Idolatry* was a *meritorious cause* of divorce; the repentance from *Idolatry* doth *qualifie* for the return of *Divine Pity and Favour*. Let such as separate from the Church, consider whether the *meritorious cause* were not obliterated, before their separation was acted, on supposition that they were unchurched.

Moreover all men will acknowledge, *Merit is not a sufficient warrant for non-communication*, because not an *actual rejection* by the Lord. God is *merciful, patient, long-suffer-*

suffering, and will not cast off his people so soon, so often as they deserve it by Apostacy and Idolatry; and hath given in charge to his Children to be *merciful* as our Heavenly Father is *merciful*; nor is he more slow to cast off a perverse *back-sliding* people, than ready to receive them *returning* and *reformed*.

But when *Merit* hath provoked, if the Church be *judicially cast off*, we must needs grant it is *unchurched*, and ceaseth to be the object of communion; and the work of the particular Members is to separate and gather new Churches, say our Schismatics; and the Church of *England* hath been legally unchurched by *Christ's institution of a Law of rejection of such Churches*, saith the Advocate of Schism; concerning which, it is necessary that we enquire

What is to be understood by *Christ's institution of a Law of rejection of such Churches*: Whether an *appointment, statute, declaration, and direction*; that when Churches are *meritiously* unchurched by *Apostacy* and *Idolatry*, that is, have deserved to be cast off as to communion with God and Christ in the Ministrations of the Mediator; they shall be *rejected by private persons, and particular Members of the Church*,

and thereby actually *unchurched*, and have the *judgment executed on them*, which they have so justly *deserved*: Or, doth it intend a *judicial proceeding* to the judgment of such merit, for which they deserve to be unchurched; and *authoritative rejection* of them by the *Court*, or *persons commissioned* and *authorized* in the Name of the Lord to *reject them*, and by that act *unchurch them*, and divest them of the Covenant of Grace, and Ministrations of the Mediator.

Though the first of these is properly *Law*, yet the second is *usually understood* by that term, both by *Civilians* and *Canonists*. The first is *Law directive*; the second is *Law executive*: The first is the guide of the second, and always supposed in it; and therefore whilst this Advocate affirmeth *England to be legally unchurched*, we must suppose a *Law instituted*, and a *legal proceeding according to that Institution*. So that, they are *legally*, intends (as we conceive) *actually unchurched*, by the *Authority*, and according to the *Order of Christs Institution*. But we must let such as on this Plea would be acquitted from the imputation of Schism, know, we are at a loss, and know not how to find the *one*, or the *other*.

First, We are to seek *Christs institution of a Law of rejection of Churches, by Apostacy*

stacy and Idolatry deserving to be cast off and unchurched. We find not any such course determined by the Lord, directed by his Word, or ever practised in his Church, by any but such as having first groundlessly separated, pretended their separation to be consonant to *such an Institution*; which yet is (if a Law, yet) *Lex ignota*, an *unknown Law*, not revealed in *Scriptures*, never proclaimed by the Lord's Heralds and Ministers, never exhibited by the Church the Pillar of Truth.

Many and great were the *defections* of God's *Israel*; Idolatry prevailed on them, and overflowed them: yet amongst them we never heard of a *Law of rejection*, either proclaimed by the *Prophets*, or practised by the *God-fearing-Israelites*, who followed not their Idolatry, but mourned under their so great defections. We read indeed of directions to the Children of the Church, to plead with

their Mother, *Hos. 2. 2.*

but their Plea was not a rejection of her by them-

Expostulanda erat cum
matre non probri cau-
sa sed ut resipiscat.
Par. in *Hos. 2.*

selves, to the unchurching of her; but an aggravation of *Divine rejection*, and earnest solicitation to *Reformation*, with assurance of God's acceptance and restored favour. The Children's reproach and rejection of a Mother

Mother divorced for her Adulteries, may be the *effect* and *consequence* of a Bill of Divorce; but it was never known to be the *formality* and *legal act* of Divorce. If every time the *froward Child* shall flye in the Mother's face, and call her *Whore*, and flye out of the House, the Mother were nullified as to relation, the *Nuptial Bond* will be often and rashly broken. The *Ten Tribes* rending themselves from the *Tabernacle of the Lord*, and the *due ministrations* thereof in the hands of his Priests, was a *voluntary departure*, whose return God often importuned by the *Ministry of his Prophets*; but so long as the *Temple* and *symbols of Divine Presence* continued to *Judah*, notwithstanding the meritorious cause of *divorce* and *rejection* by *Apostacy* and *Idolatry*, the Lord *owned* them as his people, *reproved* them by his *Prophets*, *hedged* up their way to *their Idols* by his *Plagues*, *perswaded* their return and reformation, but did not *disown* his relation to them, nor by any *Law of rejection* unchurched them; until the *shaking of the Heavens*, in which the *Veil of the Temple was rent*, and the same laid common as to the whole *Ministrations of the Law*, as manifestations of *God's Presence* removed and ceased.

The constitution of the Church in the
Old

Old Testament, never knew any *institution of a Law of rejection*, to the *unchurching* the sometime-Church of God. Nor can we find any such in the *constitution of the Church in the New-Testament*: We read indeed directions concerning *personal demeanor* towards wicked persons; That we *withdraw from every brother* that walketh disorderly, 2 *Thess.* 3. 6. and that we *company not with any brother* that is called an *Idolater*, no not to eat, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. and that we *reject an Heretick* after the first and second admonition, Tit. 2. 10. but not a word of *rejecting Churches*, and thereby *unchurching them*; all these directions concern *individual persons* towards *individuals*, as one Christian's familiarity and converse with another, not our *communion with the Church*, much less as to its *entity*, and being a *Church*, or no *Church*. These acts are directed towards *disorderly walkers*, *Hereticks*, and *Idolaters*, for their discouragement, to the discountenancing their sin; but not for legally *dismembering them*

Christ commands, If thy Brother offend thee, admonish him, *Mat.* 18. 17. then tell it to the Church; and if he hear not the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen or Publican. He doth not say, Let the Church be to thee as an Heathen or Publican: If it do not hear thy complaint, thou must not excommunicate the Church.

Cotton. Expos. on 1 *Joh.* p. 156.

from

from the Body, and dis-joining them from the Church: These are acts of *private converse* and *familiarity*, which were at the command of a *man himself*, and could operate no otherwise than to the *destruction* of *personal converse*, and were usually attendant on the *Censures of the Church*. A Brother called an *Idolater* by the authority of the Church (for *we judg those within*) is not to be accompanied with. The *disorderly* and *unquiet*, so denounced by the Church, is to be withdrawn from; and the *Heretick* is to have a *first and second admonition judicial*, before he be *rejected* as no Member of the Church. We will not restrain any man's liberty of admitting to, or barring from his *friendship* and *familiarity*, whom he will; but must note, our Lord's institution is, That no man became *as an Heathen* or *Publican*, but by due *process*, under any disorder, defection, or miscarriage, until the degrees of admonition disregarded, the Church judg and pronounce him *impenitent*; and other Institution for the *legally unchurching* of a particular Member of the Church, we find none. *Personal rejection* is either an act of *human liberty*; or an effect of *Excommunication*, no legal act of *destroying Church-relation*. If the Church in general make defection from the Lord,
and

and be overspread with Heresie or Idolatry, we allow it to be the Lord's known Will and Institution, That *those whose hearts are upright, do withdraw from communion with them*, lest they be partakers with their sin: and they must not only not *bow the knee to Baal*; but reprove such defection and idolatry, and as far as they can, keep up the publike and visible Ministrations of God's true Worship, endeavouring the reformation of it: *Such separation* is justifiable, and a duty incumbent on all that fear the Lord; but that it is any *legal rejection*, unchurching the Church, we deny. Separation of this nature was practised under the *Old and New Testament*; but the *being of the Church* was ever acknowledged, and its reformation effected. *Communion* was by all the Sober, Godly, and Learned, acknowledged to be a duty. So far as *Rome* hath the Essentials of a Church, though her Defections and Idolatry have justly exposed her to the detestation of God, and to be relinquished by his people; yet all Protestants have yeilded her *being*, desired her *reformation*, determining she remained the *Temple of God*, though defiled by the Seat of Antichrist: and many Divines in defence of the separation from *Rome* charged on the Protestants, have pleaded

pleaded many things; some, that it is *no Church*, in the sense it is proposed the object of our union, *viz.* as a *Body of Christians united to one Catholick Head*, which is indeed a Monster, and not to be found *in rerum natura*. Others, That she is *Apostate, Idolatrous, and Heretical*: but not any one ever urged, That she is *legally unchurched by rejection*: *Christ's Institution* I find not. I cannot but observe this Learned man, who maketh such short work with the Church of England, *legally to unchurch it by rejection*, makes more to do with *Rome*, and brings her not under a *non-entity* by this way.

The most rigid of the *Brownists* have determined, That *Christ's Institution* for *legal unchurching of any*

The Treatise of the Ministry of the Churches of England, in answer to Mr. Hildersham's Letter.

Church, is after previous admonitions orderly ministered, *Christ removing his Candlestick, taking the Kingdom from them, binding up the Testimony, and sealing up the Law*. And they therefore with more subtilty, though not with much strength, have assaulted the *Institution of the Ministry*, and seemed to argue the *non-esse* of the Church, by the *non-existence of Christ's true Ministry*. This all
men

men concerned in the Affairs of the Church, well know, the *rending of the Veil*, the *expiration of the Priesthood*, was God's legal institution to the unchurching of the Jews; and the *removing of the Candlestick* brought a *non-entity* on the Church of *Ephesus*, and those famous Churches of *Asia*; and with this Threatning the Ministers of God have ever threatned God's departure from a Church, the divorcing them from relation to him. The institution of *legal rejection* must be demonstrated, before *non-communion* with the Church can be on this ground justified; or *separation* can by this Plea be acquitted from *Schism*.

But supposing *rejection were Christ's Institution* for the legal unchurching of any Church, What is the *legal process, order, and method*, by which it must be executed? To whom hath Christ given a Commission by *judicial rejection* to give a Bill of Divorce to his Church? It is unreasonable to think that a *private member* of the Church may

I doubt not but a private Christian may dislike the corruptions which are allowed and practised in a whole Church: he may not subscribe, yeeld, or consent to them; so may by prayer and other good means seek the reformation of them: But that any one private Christian or some few Assemblies, may account all

the Churches in the Nation Heathen and Publicans, I do deny it. *Hildersf. Letter for the Minist.*

sit Judge on the *whole Church*, and cast it
 off from relation to Christ, and adjudg
 them *Heathens* and *Publicans*, although they
 deserve to be so adjudged: The work of
 private Members of the Church, is to de-
 ny his *personal concurrence to any sinful act*,
 by prayer, and mourning, and modest com-
 plaints, *to endeavour reformation*; but for
judicial rejection, we find no commission to
 him directed. *Independency of Churches in*
point of Discipline, doth expressely inhibit
 one Churches *rejection* of another; and such
rejection, if acted, to be *void* and *null*. Must
 we set up an *Universal Head*, who by Ca-
 tholique Authority may judicially *reject a*
Church which deserveth to be *unchurched*
for its Apostacy and Idolatry? What *Oedi-*
pus will lead us out of this Labyrinth? Is
 the *Institution* of Christ a meer *Chimera*,
 existing in no subject, never brought into
 act, nor capable of being brought into act?
 Is this to magnifie Christ the God of Order
 in all his Churches? *England* is legally *un-*
churched by *Christ's institution of rejection*.
 What Court was ever held in order to this
 Judicial Process? Hath this Church been
 duly *summoned*, fully *convicted*, and meek-
 ly *admonished* to repent their Apostacy
 and Idolatry? Hath she appeared impe-
 nitent, and refused to be healed? Who
 denounced

denounced the Judgment of rejection? Who seal'd the Bill of Divorce against this Church? What date doth it bear? How long hath *England* been hereby unchurched? In my observation of the Histories of the Church for Fifteen hundred years, I have not found any thing like a *Court holding Judicial Process* against her, other than those of the Pope's excommunicating her for returning from her Apostacy, for reforming her Idolatries; and that of the Elders and Messengers of the Hundred and twenty gathered Churches at the Savoy, October the 2d, 1658: and these were separated from communion with the Church of England, and were not fit Judges. Nor do we find they did admonish, or judicially reject her; to give them their due, they do determine themselves to have no power to reject her; they conclude in these, there is no power given by Christ unto any Synods or Ecclesiastical Assemblies, to excommunicate or threaten any Church-Censures against any Churches. Synods are not entrusted with any Church-power, or with any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves. The grave Oracle of this Assembly had the year before determined England was legally unchurched by Christ's institution of rejection: The

Their Institution of Church-Canon. 22, 26

persons of this grave Assembly not delighting in groundless scruples, *take it for granted* gathered such Societies, and formed such Churches as to them seemed good; nor once consulting the entity and existency of the Church of England.

Upon the whole of this Plea, I cannot but desire you will observe,

That England by *Apostacy, Idolatry, superstition, and Profphaness*, (that Popish Deluge, and Antichristian Inundation which brake in on the whole Catholick Church) did *deserve to be unchurched*, is granted: there was merit for a Bill of Divorce.

That God *did not unchurch* her, and give her a Bill of Divorce, but graciously continue her relation to him, and his *gracious presence in it*, by his Ministers and Martyrs, bearing testimony to the truth of his Worship, and the Ministrations of the Mediator, endeavouring, perswading her return; and at the length brake the yoke of Antichrist from off her neck; and effected her *reformation*; so that she hath restored the truth of Divine Worship, and the substance of the Ministrations of Christ, to the begetting many Sons to God, and nourishing them to salvation, cannot be denied.

That Rejection is Christ's Institution, to
the

the legal unchurcing of any Church, cannot be proved, nor allowed by any Church tender of its own beeing.

That the Church hath not been *duly and according to the Institution of Christ rejected*. None were ever constituted a Court, and commissioned Judges to this end: None ever proceeded against her in the due order of Censures: None ever presumed to this act, but those which first separated from her after her Reformation, and under her very travels for the perfection of it. None have called her Whore, and charged her to be divorced from the Lord, but those froward Children that fled from her Lap and Breasts they know not why.

That the Defections and Idolatry which sometimes defaced the Church, and threatned

Fourthly, *Defects and disorder in calling to the Ministry, and in the carriage and conversation of*

4. Defects in calling to, and Disorder in the Ministry, is no reason for separation.

Ministers, is not a sufficient ground or reason for separation from the Church, or non-communication with it. The Ministry is a sacred Office, necessary to the existency of the Church; care ought to be taken that men be duly called to it, and well carry in it;

but

but a defect in both these, hath been incident to the Church, complained of in all Ages of the Church; but was never judged by sober and serious men, studious of the Churches peace and beeing, so necessary, that the defects and disorders therein should make a *moral barr to communion*, or warrantable ground for separation. Which of the Prophets of old did not cry out against the Priests in the time of the Law, repro-

Micah 3. 11.

Isaiah 56. 10, 11.

Jer. 23. 14.

1 Sam. 2.

their *pride, oppression, covetousness, tyranny, ignorance, error, and prophaneſs*; charged them to *teach for hire, to devour the fleece, and not regard the flock; to be blind guides, such as deſpiſed knowledg, and persecuted the Prophets of the Lord, countenanced impiety, and ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked*; whose horrid lewdneſs, vile conversation and carriage, made the people *to lothe the offering of the Lord*: yet none of the Prophets, who well knew the mind of God, and made conscience of duty, did ever *ſeparate*, because of these justly reproved disorders in the Ministers; or teach the *necessity of ſeparation* on such a reason: they never did recede from the Ministrations of God in the hands of such Priests; they did

not

not refuse communion with the Church, and gather distinct, contradistinct Assemblies, under a more regular and orderly Ministry.

In the later Age of the Church of the Jews, when *defects* and *disorders* more and more encreased, the very *Institution of God* was most grievously violated; they did not only sit in *Moses Chair*, who bound on the people *heavy burdens*, but whose *life* and *Mat. 23. 2, carriage* was so repugnant to *3, 4, 5.* their *doctrine*, that our Saviour himself gave charge that the people should *attend their doctrine*, not *imitate their lives*, nor be led by their conversation; yet many times such was their doctrine, that *by their traditions* they made the Word of *Mar. 7. 9, 13.* God of none effect: and our Saviour was constrained severely to caution his Disciples to *take heed how they heard*, and to *beware Mat. 16. 6.* of the *Leaven of the Pharisees*. Yea, the *High-Priesthood*, which by God's institution was *successive*, and *perpetual to the sons of Aaron*, became *changeable* and *mercenary*: this was made

Joseph. Antiquit. lib. 20. cap. 18. lib. 28. cap. 4.
Cornel. Bertram. de Polit. Jud. cap. 18.

annual, the *Priests* altered every year, as other Governours, and the Office bought and sold for money; so that the most *vile* and *wicked men* advancing the greatest *sum of money*, and making the greatest Friends, obtained the *Priesthood*,

2 *Maceab.* 4. 7, as is evident in the case of *Jason* and *Menelaus*: 8, 26, 27.

nevertheless, the *Church* of the Jews continuing the *Church of God*, the *Priesthood* was owned by *Christ* and his *Disciples* as the *Priesthood of God*; and no separation advised or acted on the reason of such defects and disorders.

In all Ages of the *Church*, *complaints of abuses* in reference to the *Ministry*, *defects* and *disorders* in admission to, and management of the *Ministry*, have abounded by all sorts of *Divines* ancient and modern, *Conformists* and *Non-conformists*, who never did therefore deny the *being* of the *Church*, and *existency* of the *Ministry of Christ*, or judg the same any *barr* to com-

munio, or ground for separation. *Cyprian* complained, that it *grievously* Avarus est idololatra, &c. atq; hæc idolorum servitus non solum invenitur inter Christianos, verum etiam quod gemendum est, inter Episcopos. Hoc gravius discrucior quod tales non paucos pastores, habet Ecclesia, qui non solum non opponunt corpora sua adversus luporum incursus, verum etiam ipsi lupos agunt an perdunt animos, *Cyp. de dupl. Martyrio*, p. 579.

troubled

troubled him that the Church had many Pastors, who did not only not oppose the incursions of Wolves, but did themselves play the Wolves, and destroy souls, serving their bellies, gain, and ambition, and make merchandise of the Word of God, and adulterate it with ungodly opinions. Chrysostom complained, that in his days they did not only make unworthy Ministers, but eject the more worthy out of their Ministry. Nazianzen observed, they which handled holy things with unwashen hands, were more polluted and foul than they over whom they ruled. Jerome charged it as a grievous crime, that Clerks run to the Bishops Suffragans certain times in the year; and bringing to them a sum of money, they were ordained, being chosen to no charge. Ambrose observeth it to be an abuse in his time, that the Ministry was conferred for money, without regard to the fitness of the person; whilst for an hundred shillings a man was made a Priest. The Council of Nice made complaint, that in the admission of Presbyters and Bishops, many things were done contrary to the Rule.

Nec immeritos solum adlegunt, sed & idoneos eiciunt. Chrysost. de Sacerd.

Nazianzen. in Apol. & ad Max.

Jerom. ad Orea. Ep. ad Nepos.

Ambros. de Offic. lib. 1. cap. 810.

Council. Nice. 1. cap. 2.

It is too tedious to muster up the *Complaints*, grave and severe *reproofs* of the Ecclesiastical Governours, in reference to their *ignorance*, *pride*, *luxury*, *covetousness*, *enmity to godliness*, and *undue admissions to the Ministry*, made by *Nicholas Clemangus*, *Petrus de Alia-*

Nicho. Clemangus.
Speculum Eccle-
sia.

Petrus de Alia-
Reform. Ecclesia

co, *Bernard*, and our own *Gildas* of old; *Latimer*, *Rid-*
ley, *Hooper*, *Whitaker*, *Ball*,

Nichols, *Hind*, and many others of late; all which have in their places born their testimony against the *defects* and *disorders* of the *Ministry*, who yet never denied the *existence of the Ministry* or *Church*, nor urged or allowed of separation on any such ground or reason; but resisted the same as a most wild, rude, irrational and irreligious inference from such premises. It were to be wished, that the *care of the Church* were alway such, that this stone of stumbling might not lye in the way of the weak; but that men of *knowledg*, *sound in the faith*, and of *godly conversation*, were with consent or election of the people, duly *ordained* and *admitted to the sacred Function* of the *Ministry*; and that such as are entrusted with this holy Employ, would by their *diligence* in *ministring*, and *unblameable life*, engage the *affections* of the people,

people; and *adorn* the Ministrations of the Mediatorship of Christ our Lord. But alas! no Age of the Church hath yet returned, wherein this care hath not in some degree more or less given occasion of blame and reproof to the *settled* and serious Members of the Church, reproach and scandal to the *weak* and *inconsiderate* Christian. It must therefore be the study of all Members of the Church, to be so well acquainted with Principles of Truth, that they may be *established* against every temptation which seduceth from the *communion of the Church*: Let such therefore whose mouths are full of complaints against the *undue* and *disorderly admission* of unworthy men to the Ministry, grieved that the *election of the people* is much excluded, men of *ignorance, error, and prophaneſs*, are sometimes ordained; and many Ministers by *negligence* in their Ministry, *vileness* of their practice, make the Ordinances of God unsavoury, and less *acceptable* to their souls: yet well understand, they have not hence a *warrantable* reason for *separation* from the Church; but may be established in their communion with it, by convincing their minds of these two certain and acknowledged Truths.

I. *Defects and disorders in admission to,*
and

and execution of the Ministry, doth not nullifie or make void the Office in them on whom it is so conferred, and by whom it is so managed. The saving-truths of God, and the true Ministry of Christ, are essential to the Church: but as the truth may be found as to all fundamental points, though mixed with many errors: so also the true Ministry of Christ may exist really, and the object of our faith and attention, though in many things deficient and delinquent. If in calling to the Ministry, some things of man be mixed with that which is of God, as Human Superiority with Divine Ministry, in them who ordain to this Office; no sound and serious Christian will therefore cast away the Ministry, which is from God, as a nullity and Ministry to be abhorred, as did the wild and heady Brownist, plunged into the gulf of Schism. Admission unto the Ministry I confess ought to be according to the rules of Gods word in all things: men to be admitted, ought to be duly qualified, and on examination found to be sound in the faith; able, and apt to teach; and blameless in conversation; and much more to approve themselves such in execution of the Ministry committed to their charge.

Nor will I deny the election of a Minister to be the peoples priviledg; of great con-

conveniency (where it can be *orderly acted*) to the Church : yet I must confess I am to seek the institution of it by the Lord, especially as to its *essentiality to the Office of the Ministry*, which is only by such as separate from the Church, so much contended for, as by the defect of it, to deny the *existency* of the Ministry, and destroy the *very being* of the Church. Besides the *weak grounds* in Scripture pretended for its being essential to the Ministry, when I consider the *inconstancy of its use*, the *confusions* and *disorders* to which it is subject, its *aptitude to heap up men-pleasing Teachers*, according to the tickling-desire of itching-ears, by reason of which, it hath not been constantly allowed in any Church in the Christian World; and hath many times in the *ancient* and in the *reformed Church*, been justifiably denied, at least limited and restrained by the Officers and Presbyters of the Church: I cannot see ground whereupon to conclude it *God's institution essential to the Ministry*. I consent to *Tarnovius*, that election of the people be *vocationis initium*; its only use being to *assign a person or subject of the Office*, but not to *convey any the*

Hanc vero electionem quæ vocationis initium tantum est, differre ab ipsa vocatione, patet ex Actis cap. i. v. 23, 26. *Tarnov. de Sa. Ministerio, lib. 1. cap. 6.*

least

least *authority* or formality of Office; so that by it a Minister should exist, and not at all *without it*. But I must heartily sub-

Dr. Lazarus Seaman his
Paradiatribe, or Vindi-
cation of the Reform-
ed Churches concern-
ing Ordination, p.27.

scribe to the observation of a Reverend Doctor among the *London-Presbyters*, in this case, and on the dispute of Election as essential to the Ministers call, observed: *Every Minister lawfully called, is a gift of Christ, therefore the people should rather receive Ministers from his hands by the ordination of other Ministers and Elders, than give Ministers to Christ, and unto themselves: If Ministers be sent them, and set over them by the Lord, they may receive them by acceptance, and give up themselves unto the Lord, and to them as his Ministers, although they do not first and formally chuse them: Carnal respects may sometime cause godly people to chuse one before another: True Apostles were often despised, when false Teachers, the Messengers of Satan, were welcomed as the Angels of light. And we cannot but remember St. Paul's prophesie, which is too much verified in the history of our times: The time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts they shall heap up to themselves Teachers, having itching ears. What kind of Ministers, Church-*
edifying

edifying Preachers, may we suppose the election of the people will in this case make?

The godly, learned, and judicious members of the Church, have in all Ages, consonant to the Scripture, ever distinguished between an *error*, *defect*, and *disorder* in admission to, or management of the Ministry; and the *flat, positive nullity* of the Office it self; and could never yet see cause to conclude, That *defects in the Call*, did make the Calling *void*. If one *blame-worthy* were admitted to, or tolerated in the Ministry, he is not to be reputed one acting without any *Call, Office, or Authority*; and the communion of the Church was not on that account to be forsaken. The High Priests among the *Jews* admitted *yearly*, and for *money*, were *undue*; but yet indeed High Priests in the Church of the *Jews*, and never denied by our Saviour or his Apostles. *Ambrose*, a Novice in Christian Verity, was chosen when a *Catechumenus*, before he was baptized, to be Bishop of *Mil-lan*; yet his Office was never judged void. What shall we say of *Nectarius* of *Constantinople*; *Anatolius* consecrated by *Dioscorus*; and many others mentioned in Ecclesiastical Story, unduly admitted to the Ministry, yet owned as lawful Ministers? The Orthodox

thodox Fathers professed a sense of *Ministerial Authority* which was among the *Donatists*; they would allow the Bishops among them ordained, if they would return

to the Church, that (saith

August. per bre. collat. cap. 5. & 2 Epist. contra Parm. cap. 13.

Austine) they might understand *Catholicks* do not detest *Christian Consecration*, but *Human Error*. Of all Modern Re-

formed Divines, I find none more severe

than *Danæus*, in rebuking the defects and dis-

Distinguendum est inter Vocationem omnino illegitimam, & in parte tantum illegitimam. Cujus vocatio est omnino illegitima, pro

order of admissions to the Ministry (which appear

privato sit habendus; qui autem ex parte tantum sit illegitime vocatus, veluti si per Simoniam munus adeptus est; vel non legitimo populi & Senatus Ecclesiastici consensu: non habenda est pro omnino nulla hujusmodi vocatio: hic

grievous to the spirits of many among us); yet

Sacramenta conferre potest. Sic Scribæ & Pharisei in Cathedra Moysi sedebant; sic Caiaphas in Pontificatu summo erat, quem pretio redemerat? itaq; exemplo Christi & Apostolorum, secessio à corpore Ecclesiæ non fit facienda; ab iis nos segregare non debemus in alium coetus sed pacem Ecclesiæ colere nos oportet. *Danæus* in 1 Tim. 5.

none more positive and clear in distinguishing

between such defects, disorders, and the Office by

them conferred; most positively concluding,

this is no ground for separation from the Church:

teaching to distinguish between a Call wholly

unlawful,

unlawful; and unlawful only in part; and though the first is void and null, yet this last is erroneous, and to be corrected, not avoided or denied; nor may we on such ground separate from the Church, and gather into other Assemblies (which, saith he, were to bring back into the Church the *Donatists Heresie*) any more than the Apostles or Christ himself did divide from the Church of the Jews, because the *Scribes and Pharisees* were unduly gotten into *Moses Chair*, and *Caiaphas* was for a sum of money made High Priest; yet owned as the High Priest towards God. And the very Popish Priests cannot be said to be no *Ministers*. The Nonconformists have much complained of defects and disorders in the Ministry, yet judged it not void and null, nor the same a sufficient ground for separation. The old Cartwright was very invective against the abuses of the Ministry, yet he denieth that he intended ever to conclude there was no Church or Ministry in England; or that it would

Is it all one to say, The word is not purely preached, and it is not truly preached? They never said, There is no Ministry, no Word, no Sacraments, no Church in England. T. C. I. Repl. pag. 23. 26.

any way follow on his reproof. And in an Epistle to his Sister *Ann Stubbs*, doth roundly check her for *stumbling at this stone*,

stone, that when a thing is wanting in the Church, which God hath required, instead of concluding the Church was imperfect, she did conclude it was no Church at all.

See Hilderſham's Letter about the Ministry, and Bill againſt Can.

Our late Nonconformiſts have very copiouſly amplified this truth, and improved it ſtrenuouſly againſt the rigid Browniſts, who laboured to defend their horrid ſeparation, by ſuppoſed defects and diſorders in the Miniſtry, as their ſureſt hold. We might learn from the New-England Divines to diſtinguiſh between the things

Cotton of Infant-Baptiſm, p. 134.

which are ſpiritual, proper, and eſſential to the calling of a Miniſter, and the things which are adventitious and accidental. Such Nonconformiſts who have been careful, agreeably to Scripture, Reason, and conſent of all Antiquity, to diſtinguiſh betwixt a main diſorder, and defect, in the calling of a Miniſter, and the nullity or non-entity of his Office, have ever reſiſted, reſproved ſeparation, and ſpoken plainly out, That there is in this reſpect no warrantable ground for the ſame.

2. Let it be conſidered, The efficacy of the Miniſtry doth depend on the Authority of the Office, not on the ſanctity of the Miniſter

Minist'ring before the Lord. All such who are in the Church *sanctified to the work* of the Lord, and service of his Church, and approach nigh an holy God, to *sanctifie his Name* in the Ministration of holy things, ought by a *blameless conversation* approve themselves *sanctified by the Lord*. Holiness of life giveth a great emphasis to *sound doctrine*, and maketh the things of God more savoury and acceptable to the people: but yet we must know, the *efficacy* of the Ministrations of Christ's Mediatorship, depends on the *Office and Authority*, not on the *holiness of him who minist'reth*. Holy men minist'ring the things of God without a *due Call, Office, and Authority*, do act a *nullity*, not acceptable to the Lord, nor of advantage to his people, like the *Incense of Corah*; and instead of supporting the shaking Ark of God, may provoke a *Perez-Uzzah* in Israel. But men of *prophane hearts* and *unclean hands*, minist'ring the Institutions of the Lord, do with *Authority* sollicite Faith and Obedience, and minister with *efficacy*. The sons of *Eli* were sons of *Be-lial*, and committed *horrid vilemess* in the face of *Israel*; their fond Father did not restrain them; yet it is clear in Scripture, and

Corron's Exposition on
1 John: fol. 157.

of separation, it was the *sin of the people* therefore to *loathe and leave* (if they so did, which doth not appear) the *offerings of the Lord*. It is a question out of all question, yet stuck at by too many with little reason, and I fear as little religion, viz. *Whether he that is void of the Grace of God, a lewd and prophane Minister, may convert others, and be the Minister of Salvation to them who hear him?* This hath ever by all men of serious and sober spirits, been resolved in the affirmative; because such an one is the *Minister of Christ*, ministring the *Ordinances of Grace* with *authority*, in the *Name of Christ*; and *efficacy* depends on the *Office*, not on the *Person*. Were it not possible for *prophane Preachers* to profit their hearers, What can we suppose induced our Saviour to charge his Disciples to *hear them who were in Moses Chair*, who said, *but did not?* Or what ground could there be of *Paul's* fear, that *whilst he preached to others, himself might be a cast-away?*

Doctrinæ notitia, & vocatio ad ipsam essentiam Ministri necessarii requirantur. Sed integritas vitæ ad bene esse tantum ad ipsum, tamen est necessaria ex præcepto Dei. *Amf. Cas. Con. cap. 45.*

Or of his joy that *Christ was preached*, though *envy* was the principle of action in such as preached him? And in sense hereof all Divines, even the most curious *Calvinist*,

just, who have required *holiness of life* in the Ministers of the Lord; have made *Docrine* and *Office* necessary as *essential*, and without which they cannot minister; but *holiness of life* necessary, as a *personal qualification*; which may benefit the Church, but not give any *formality* or *efficacy* to the Ministration.

On the whole of this Argument I cannot but conclude *Christ's Ministry existing*, he is present in his Church: and there can be no *ground* of separation by reason of the *defects* and *disorders* in calling to, and management of the Ministry; because how *distastful*, *scandalous*, and *grievous* soever these may be to the Church, and Members thereof, they do not *nullifie* the Ministry, and take away the efficacious operation of the Office.

Fifthly, *Rude and disorderly Ministrations of God's Worship*, is not a *moral barr* to communion, or *warrantable ground* for separation from the Church. Men in their *rash recesses* from the Church, catch at any thing that may but pretend to frighten them from communion with it; and if any thing dislike their mind, or distaste their fancy, they improve it to the destruction and nullifying the acts of Worship, and Ordinances of Grace, about which the same is conversant.

It is very desirable, and should be the great care of all that minister before the Lord, That they not only present before the Lord *true Fire*, God's instituted Worship, avoiding the *Superstition* of Nadab and Abihu; with due *Authority*, in Aaron's Censers consecrated to the Lord, avoiding the *Usurpations* of Corah: but also with due *reverence*, *seriousness*, and *gravity*, in the Ministerial Mode, Order, and Method, which God hath directed, and the nature of the Act performed, and Ordinance administered, doth require; avoiding the *prophaness* of the sons of Eli, which rendred the Sacrifices of the Lord *loathsome to the people*. But note we; So long as God's *true Worship* is by a *true Ministry* exhibited in the Church, and do essentially for *matter* and *form* exist; if the *Ministerial Mode* be violated and neglected, become *rude* and *disorderly*, such as is justly grievous to a gracious heart, and may provoke complaints; yet there is not a *sufficient ground* for *separation* from the Church, nor *moral barr* to the Worship so ministered: for God's Worship *essentially existing*, is the *symbol* of his *Presence* in the Church, and is *edifying* to his people under the most *rude*, *prophane*, and *disorderly* Ministration that can be. It is indeed true, that a *due*, *grave*, *sober*, *serious*,

rious, orderly Ministration, doth make God's Ordinances more *acceptable* and *savoury* to the soul; but a soul longing after Gods Presence, and truly thirsting after the Waters of the Sanctuary, will not say, the *rudeness* of the Conduit, and *disorder* in conveyance, hindreth the quenching of his thirst, and therefore he will not drink: *pure Water* received in a *rude order* and *vessel*, is refreshing to the thirsty Traveller.

Under the *Paedagogie* of the Law, God did not only institute the *matter* and *essential form* of the Worship to be tendred unto himself; but also prescribed the *ministerial mode* by which it should be exhibited among his people, which yet was often *transgressed* without *separation* from the Church. In the institution of the Priesthood he directed the succession of the High-Priest, which in the later Ages of the Church of the *Jews* was most horribly violated; yet no *separation* was thereupon inferred or practised by the most serious men. God did not only appoint his peoples *feasting before him*, in the eating the Sacrifice; but also *assigned* the Priests and peoples peculiar parts, and *prescribed* the manner and order of *taking* and *eating the same*; the which was violently violated by

the sons of *Eli*, to the peoples *loathing*, who never durst therefore *leave* the Offerings of the Lord.

Under the Gospel, the Ministrations of Divine Worship being more *moral* and *swaſive*, more *rational* and *discourſive*, as accommodated to a more *adult* and *virile* ſtate than was the Jews. Chriſt our Lord hath inſtituted the *matter* and *eſſential form*, by which his Worship muſt exiſt in his Church; but hath left the *miniſterial mode*, by which it ſhall be exhibited among men, to the *prudential management* of his Miniſters, to whom he giveth gifts for the edification of his Church: ſo that *Prayer* in the formality of it, is a *calling on God in the Name of Chriſt*, for things according to *his will*: this muſt be done by all that profeſs his Name; and, becoming the publick act of the Church, is to be performed in ſuch *method*, and cloathed with ſuch *words*, as the Miniſter who exhibits the ſame, doth in prudence conceive *fit to the edification of the Church*. So it is alſo as to *Preaching* the Word, and *adminiſtration of the Sacraments*; concerning all which, all men muſt needs grant, No *ſet-form* is *inſtituted*, nor yet *inhibited* by the Lord. The *miniſtry* of theſe things is charged on the Miniſters, with general rules of order and edification,

with-

without any *ministerial mode* or *form of words* by which they must be ministred: nor is a liberty denied to any, to digest unto himself a *ministerial mode, method, and order*, by which to exhibit these acts of Worship in, and to the Church: So that *set-forms of Prayer*, though not *necessary*, cannot be denied to be *lawful*, and such by which the Worship of God doth *truly exist*, and is, or may be *profitably exhibited* in, and to the Church: yea, the same hath been found so greatly convenient to the *exclusion of Error*, and keeping up *uniformity* in publike Ministrations in the Church, that the first Ages of the *Concil.* Church required *particular Mi-* *Milev.* *nisters*, before-hand to digest and compose their *Prayers*, and communicate them *doctioribus fratribus* to their more learned Brethren, to be judged by them. And the after-ages of the Church, by *common consent*, composed and established *Liturgies* and *publick modes* of Ministration, which by the prevalency of Antichrist became *erroneous*, *heretical*, *rude*, and *disorderly*; yet such was their *conveniency*, that in the Reformation, *publike Liturgies* were judged so convenient in *publike Ministry*, that all the *Reformed Churches* did, and to this day by *Reformed Liturgy*,

or at least *stated Directory*, do exhibit the Worship of God in, and to his Church.

All Reformed Churches have a *publick Liturgy*, or Mode of Ministration of *Prayer* and *Sacraments*; though all have not the *same Liturgy*, but some may be more *sound, serious, grave, orderly*, and composed, than others; yet in all, the *Prayers, reading of Scriptures, and ministration of Sacraments*, is in a *stated order*, and by a *set-form of words*: Such therefore as flye out of the Church because of a *Service-Book* and *Liturgy*, do not more loudly proclaim the *weakness of their Reason*, in confounding a *Human Mode*, by God left at liberty, with *Divine Institution*, which must be always the same; than *want of Charity*, condemning the Generations of the Just, the Reformed Churches, as being without the *true worship of Christ*, and *ministrations of the Mediator*; with unspeakable madness branding the *Service-book* (never proposed the object of our adoration, nor adored by any) to be an *Idol*: the *Liturgy* to be *superstition*, though in general it celebrates no *matter*, but the very *institutions of God*, to be express *payson*, though it generally exhibit *Prayer* and *Sacraments* in words of truth, tending to edification; and to destroy the very *essential mode of Worship*, which

which both as to *matter* and *form* cannot be denied by it to exist the *very Worship of God*. All which uncharitable, irrational, irreligious censures, are so *wild*, that they need no confutation; but of their own accord, and on the very sound, retort on the Assertors thereof, to their reproach, and reproof of that rabid fury from which they do arise.

Let none expect or account me the *Advocate of the Liturgy*, and *Mæcenæ of the Common-prayer*: I undertake no such task; nor am I about any such work: I believe *personal Abilities* are given to Ministers, with *which to minister* the things of God. I wish all the *Ministers* in the Church were so *gifted*, that there were no need of a *Liturgy*; and I wish the *Prudence* of the Church might prescribe such *Liturgies*, and with such *liberty*, that the weak might have no occasion to *stumble*, but that we may strengthen the *feeble knees*, and *hands which hang down*. I shall on a concession, and supposition that the *Liturgy* by which the *Worship of God* (attendance on which, is required from us in our communion with the Church) is a *rude and disorderly ministration of Worship*, very *evil*, and *such as ought to be removed*; yet affirm, it is not an *evil of that nature* which will warrant separation,

on, and make a *moral barr* to our communion, and justifiable reason for our *recess* from the Church, unto the *forming other Assemblies*. And for the clearing of the truth of this Assertion, let me desire you without passion or prejudice, to consider these three cogent and convincing Reasons or Demonstrations.

I. True Worship doth truly exist by the Liturgy.

First, Whatsoever *rudeness* or *disorder* in the Ministration, is charged on the Liturgy: The

Worship of God by it ministred doth *truly exist*, and is *savingly exhibited*; whilst God is *truly worshipped*, none will so much as say there is or can be a *justifiable ground for separation from the Church*; and that God is *truly*, though not *orderly worshipped* by the ministrations of the Liturgy, cannot be denied. The most curious *separating Critick* was never able to charge the *matter of the Liturgy*: the *Word of God* is according to its direction *read*; things *according to God's will* are in it; the *matter of Prayer, Baptism, and the Lords Supper*, are Seals of the Covenant by it applied; and all these are *God's instituted Worship*: Nor doth the Liturgy destroy the *essential form* by which these must *savingly exist*: the Scriptures are *audibly, distinctly, publickly* read in a *known*

known Tongue: God is called on in the
Name of Christ: Water is by a *lawful Mi-*
nister applied to a *fit subject*, in the *Name*
of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:
 Bread and Wine is *blessed, broken, given,*
received, eaten, and drunk, in remem-
 brance of the death of Christ our Savi-
 viour: So that the most censorious *Brow-*
nist never could, nor can any now deny,
 but *God's true Worship* doth *truly, fully, for-*
mally exist. The Liturgy doth not alter
matter or form of Divine Appointment;
vitiateth no Ordinance of God, *nullifieth*
 no Institution: Where is then the ground
 of separation? The Liturgy puts on God's
 Worship a *Ministerial mode* (by which to
 exhibit it to the Church) which is *distastful*
 to God's People, but not *destructive* to
 God's Worship: What must be done in
 this case? Must we break from communi-
 on, and recede from Divine Institution?
 Shall an unfavoury *vehiculum* make us to
 refuse the Spirit, or Medicinal Potions
 thereby conveyed for our health? Shall
 an *unhandsome dress* make Children loathe
 their Mother? Or, Shall a *rude and disor-*
derly Service, which cleanliness may nau-
 seate, make us flye from the Table, and
 break good fellowship, where *wholesome*
food is with *kind welcome* tendred after an
unhand-

unhandsome manner? How repugnant is this to reason? And who can raise the *Liturgy* to an higher pitch of exception than this? Not I, nor any sober, serious man.

Yet one, bearing some aspect of *Learning, Reason, and Sobriety*, but wholly unknown to me (whether a *Divine* or *Gentleman*, a *true Minister*, or *gifted-Brother*, I cannot tell), in a Manuscript to me transmitted, attempteth to raise the exception against the *Liturgy* to an height, which will not only warrant, but necessitate separation from the things by it ministred: He chargeth the *Liturgy* to corrupt and destroy the *essential mode of Worship by it ministred*. This (saith he) is the case of the *Liturgy*; *The essential Mode of New-Testament-Worship by God's appointment, is this, That the Worship should be ministred by, or from the abilities of the Minister; which is directly crossed by the Liturgy; not as it is imperfect or rude, but as it is an enjoined Mode*. And again: *The Liturgy dischargeth the essential Mode of Worship, and an accidental Mode, contrary to it, is put in the room of it*. An Argument which (if proved) will make the *separation* in case of *Liturgy*, *just* and *warrantable*; because in the *Ministration* of it, *God's Worship ceaseth to be*. But this Gentleman is so confounded in the notion

tion of his *Essential Mode*, that he in direct contradiction to his former expression, tells us, That *some corruptions make the Worship neither void nor null; which notwithstanding men hold the Head, and worship God in Christ in the Ordinances of God, with devotion which doth speak them serious; yet offending in some circumstances, it may be against some Mode determined by the Lord, for the better management of his Worship. Under this I desire to comprehend the corruptions of the Liturgy.* And in another Paper to me sent as an *Answer to my Reply* to this *new notion*, being set in the Stocks, and pinched with his *modus essentialis destroyed by the Liturgy*, is very angry with me for understanding the discharge of the *modus essentialis* in so strict (though but its proper) sense, as to nullifie and make void the thing by it existing: yet himself had affirmed, the *essential Mode of Worship, is a part of Worship, and not a circumstance; and the Mode discharged by the Liturgy, he maketh as essential to Worship, as was the Temple and Aaronical Priesthood to the Jews; and as is an ordained Minister to New-Testament-Worship.* And concludeth, the discharge of this *Essential Mode* maketh the Liturgy *a corruption more than extrinsecal, that which vitiateth the subject;*
and

and *more than circumstantial*, destroying the very substance.

I intend not to dispute this new Notion; which, were it true, would make the greatest ground of separation ever urged. But note on it,

1. *Conviction* cannot be expected from, or by *Notions*, which *confound* the mind of him who argueth, and *matter* by him argued. This Gentleman in his last Answer appeareth driven into a passion, which hath caused me to be silent; and being perplexed about his *essential mode discharged*, and *Worship not destroyed*; he runs for

Nullus cultus simpliciter dicendus est Accidentalís quia habet in sese essentialiam ipsam cultús. *Ames. Med. cap. 13. 21.*

refuge to Dr. *Ames*. assertion, *New self-invented Worship* added to God's Worship, is not *circumstantial*, but *essential*: Not observing the

Chapter to which he refers, discourseth of *Instituted Worship*; and the thing he speaketh of, is *new matter* added to, not a *new mode* put on God's Worship: and though *essential* may be taken in a more

Modus rei essentialis in rem situs, est rei proprius, & ab re distinctus: unde existentia est purus modus.

large sense, and such as may be in some cases spoken of *separable adjuncts*, and *circumstances* or *accidents*; yet *essential mode* cannot

cannot be so; for this is so *essential* to the thing modified, that it *removed*, the thing is *not the same it was*: for one thing existeth *distinct* from another, only by its *essential mode*: Though I can allow an *essentiality of Worship* to Ministration, or praying by personal Abilities; yet I cannot believe *Worship* or *Prayer* can exist *Prayer*, if the *essential Mode* be any way destroyed.

2. *Ministration by personal Abilities*, is without doubt *necessary*, and the *duty of such as minister between God and his people*; for God giveth not Gifts in vain: But that it is the *essential mode of Worship*, I see not, nor hath this Gentleman proved. Christ ascended, gave gifts unto men for the work of the *Ministry*: Gifts received, are *designed*, and ought to be *improved* for the *edifying of the Body of Christ*: The restraint of Ministerial Gifts by *themselves* or *other*, is not good; the *total exclusion of their exercise* in, and to the Church, were undoubtedly a great evil; but that *ministration by them* is the *essential mode of Worship*, doth no where appear. I am sure the same *Ames*. who makes *added matter* of *Worship* to be *essential*, makes the *mode of*

Specialis mos Dei cultus specialiter determinari de proprio cuiusque actus religiosæ specialis natura postulat huc pertinent quæ a cultum institutum continent. *Ames*. M. cap. 14.

Prayer to be but a *circumstance*: And though he determineth a *special*, yet not an *essential mode*; and therefore makes the *nature of the act or duty*, the *sole dictate of the mode of Ministration*. It is fit every man pray according to his *capacity* and *natural abilities of conception* and *utterance*; but those *private men* which pray *set-forms of Prayer*, must not be denied to pray with probability of acceptance with God. *Embassadors* are supposed men of *Parts*, and *good personal Abilities*, which they are bound to employ to the utmost in the *management of their Embassy*; but is any man so void of reason as to say or think, when in a *set-speech* (it may be) prescribed to him (not by the King, but his Council) he *declare his Embassy*, That he hath discharged the *essential mode of his Embassy* & Imposed *set-forms of Prayer*, are sometimes *convenient and profitable to the Church*, for the *antiipation of confusion and error*; but there can be no good in the discharge of the *essential mode of a duty*. I wish the *Church Ministers of good Abilities*, and *Ministers Conscience to improve their Gifts to the edifying of the Church*; and *Christians so much sober*, as to know, that if the *weakness of some* supplied by, and the *sluggishness of others*, do admit *special modes of Worship*

Worship by others prescribed or enjoined; the *essential mode* is not destroyed; Prayer is truly *Prayer to God*, by any form, though a *set-form*.

3. If the Liturgy be only so corrupted, that the same notwithstanding *men may hold the Head, and with devotion call on God, and be accepted by him* (as this my Antagonist in his first and second Answer would have me know he believes), then the same is but an *extrinsecal corruption*, which *vitiateth not the subject*; a *circumstantial*, not an evil in the *substance*: the *essential mode of Worship is not destroyed*, and consequently giveth no ground for *separation*, or warrant for non-*communion*: for this high-flown notion is fallen, and can never be raised higher, than to charge the *Ministration by the Liturgy* with *rudeness and disorder*; which will not make any *moral barr* to communion, or ground for separation; as is more evident in the second Consideration.

Secondly, Consider, The greatest *rudeness and disorder* which the highest *discontent*, and *uncharitable censure* of the most guilty and angry *Separatists*, can charge on the *Liturgy*, is no more, no not so much, as was to be charged on

2. The rude Ministration of *Eli's Sons*, no cause of Separation.

Y the

the *Ministrations of the Sons of Eli*. And thus then I argue: The *prophane, rude, and disorderly ministrations of God's Worship by the Sons of Eli, made no moral barr or warrantable Supersedeas to communion with the Church in God's Worship thereby ministered: this was no ground for separation.*

The ministration by the Liturgy is not more (no, not so) rude and disorderly than was the *ministration of the Sons of Eli*.

Therefore the *ministration by the Liturgy is no moral barr to communion, no warrantable ground for separation from the Church.*

This instance of the ministration of the Sons of *Eli*, I do chiefly present to you (passing the transgressed *Institution of the High-Priest*, and the *rude ministration of the Scribes and Pharises* (which might be aptly improved to the same purpose), because most apt to our case, most obvious to every common Reader of Scriptures; and that which having been often urged by the *Opposers*, could never be contradicted or denied by the greatest *Advocates* of Separation. That the truth of the first Proposition, *viz. The rude and prophane ministration of the Sons of Eli, made no barr to communion, no ground of separation,* is so clear, it cannot be denied: Though it caused the people of the Lord to *loathe,*

no God-fearing Israelite therefore did or durst leave *1 Sav. 2. 17.* the offerings of the Lord.

The general current of Expositors conclude, *None did therefore separate from the Service of the Tabernacle;* and such who suppose some did separate, conclude it was their sin. Mr. Cotton of New-

England positively affirmeth, *Cotton on 1 John fol. 157.*

When the Sons of Eli corrupted the Sacrifices of God, their sin was great; yet it was the sin of the people to separate, and abhor the Sacrifice. This granted, needs no proof.

The Minor Proposition cannot be denied: When the whole Charge that the most censorious separating Momus can draw up against the Liturgy, is considered (besides that the truth of it may be questioned), it will not surpass, no nor match the *rude ministrations of the sons of Eli.* And because some, in some Papers to me passed, have endeavoured to load the Liturgy, and make it the great and justifiable reason of not loathing, but leaving the Worship of God ministred by it; I will amplifie this Proposition by this short and plain Parallel between the *rude ministrations of the Sons of Eli*, and *supposed Evils of the Liturgy.*

1. *Paral.* If the Liturgy do discharge the *ministerial mode of Worship*, which without any *positive Prescription*, or *particular Law and Direction* from the Lord, is only dictated by the *nature of the thing to be modified* according to the *discretion and prudence* of him who ministreth (and that is the most can pretend to be urged against it, to inform the evil of it); Then *ministerial mode of Worship*, by a *positive and particular Law* determined, and *directed by God himself*, was neglected, violated, and discharged; and a *contrary mode* induced, innovated, and used in the *holy things of God*, in the *ministrations* of Eli's sons. An Antagonist of mine (willing to avoid the force of this Parallel) cries out, *What was the sin of the sons of Eli?* I join issue with him in the enquiry, and we shall find it was *formally*, what he would fain charge on the Liturgy; though not a *discharge of the essential mode*, yet the *ministerial mode* which God by a *special Law* had instituted: their sin is on all hands agreed to be a *transgression of the order* of celebrating the *Peace-offering* appointed to be a *feast before the Lord*. Their sin (saith our Antagonist) was *Covetousness*; *Sacriledg*, saith Piscator; a *general transgression of the Law of the Peace-offering*, Lev. 7. 31, 32, 33, 34. It was

was a taking to themselves more than God allotted them; and in undue order, contrary to divine direction, without (say many Expositors) those Rites and Ceremonies they were bound to observe, to

Grotius.
Drusius.
Vatablus.

the creating of a right to their own part: Whether they did neglect to heave and wave the breast and shoulder, and to burn the fat (as many Learned men suppose they did), I will not stand to dispute; so much is granted by those we deal with in this case, as that we need no more: for it is agreed, That the Law of Ministration appointed by God, was violated. The Priests were not contented with the part (the breast and shoulder) allotted them by the Institution of God; and if they took them, and not other parts instead of them; yet they took more; that which was, if not God's part immediately designed to the fire; yet was his part of the Sacrifice by institution to be eaten by the people, as an holy Banquet and Act of Religion.

They took what they took, by violence, at their own will, in an undue, rude, irreverent order; as acted by Lust, not awed by devotion, or sense of Religion: They took it before the fat was

אֵלֶּיךָ

Additō *Beib* significat
antequam, quasi non-
dum, quam nondum.
Leigh's Crit. Sac. Non-
dum ascendere facie-
bant pinguedinem ad
Altare. Cald.

burned, saith the Text,
with a Preposition which
plainly signifieth it was
not burned; and is so
understood and interpre-
ted by all Interpreters;
which occasioned the Sa-

crificer's demand, *First burn the fat, then
take what thy soul desireth*: I see no reason
in the Text and Context, to lead my An-
tagonist to think, *whilst the fat was in burn-
ing, the Priests Servant with greediness and
irreverence went about to take such parts of
the Sacrifice as would satisfy his Master's
lust*; which yet is in our case of the Litur-
gy, a *rudeness and disorder* more than suffi-
cient to our purpose. So that upon the
whole we see much *violence offered to the
Institution of God*; these wicked men had
*scorned the Offering of the Lord, kicked at
his Sacrifice*, become their own Carvers,
and *cut out the holy things of God* accord-
ing to their will, not God's appointment;
and taken by *violence, unseasonably, irrever-
ently, and unduly*, what belonged not to
them; so that they ministred great occasi-
on of *loathing*, but not any sufficient ground
to leave the Offerings of the Lord, and sepa-
rate from the Church, as many do in the case
of

of the *Liturgy*, which in the *highest censure* is only guilty of violating the *gravity* and *order* of Ministration; the *nature* of the duty, and *human prudence* might suggest, but God hath not by any *special law* or *direction* instituted.

2. This rude and prophane Ministration was not *present* and *transient*, for a *day*, by the *accident* of a more

rude and prophane Minister; but it was *reiterated*, *fixed*, and *imposed*;

De recenter consuetudine à sacerdotibus introducta legem Dei immutantes. Vat.

so that the *Sacrificer* knew before-hand, *their Sacrifice*, the *solemn things of God*, would be *thus used*. It was their *custom*, saith our Translation; and some Expositors, it was *not so from the beginning*, but a *custom newly introduced by the Priests*, *changing the Law of God*. It was their *Ratio*, say *Junius* and *Tremelius*, bottomed on the *good reason* of their *lust* and *advantage*, and therefore pleaded by the *Servant*, The *Priest will not have sodden flesh*, but *roast*. Their *jus* and *judicium*,

saith the *Arabick*, with *Drusius*, *Munster*, and

Jus quod sibi facere præsumpserunt.

Clarins, following the same; a *right established in judgment*; though that which the *sons of Eli* (who then rul'd the roast) made unto themselves a *right of self-creation*; yet

so settled, that it might abide a suit at Law, and bear the aspect of Right : it was their *δικαιοσυνη* Righteousness or Justice, saith the Septuagint; their justification by which they justified themselves in their rude and irreverent order, against the rebukes of the reproving-Sacrificer. It was their common constituted course, saith the Chaldee Paraphrase, which was known to, and imposed on all Israel, that came to Shiloh to sacrifice unto the Lord.

The reiteration, customary use, and imposition of an evil order, is an aggravating-evil; but the evil reiterated, used, and imposed, must form the reason of loathing and leaving the offerings of the Lord. Though many lay much stress in the imposing and prescribing of the Liturgy, it beareth no strength, for that Evil which will warrant separation from Divine Worship, if once, and arbitrarily existing, is in it self cogent; but the reiteration and imposition of an evil not sufficient of it self to warrant separation, will not make it such.

3. The reformation of this rude and prophane Ministration, was neglected by Eli, who had the power of restraining and correcting the same, and was resisted by his sons, who defended the same by violence, against the devout Sacrificer, grieved with such disorders,

orders, and directing to Divine Institution. The evil to be reformed, not the evil of non-reformation, makes the warrant and ground of separation.

4. This rude and prophane ministration was greatly displeasing to the Lord, who for non-reformation thereof, did destroy Eli and his House; and distastful to his people, who did therefore loathe, and incline (not without sin) to leave the Offerings of the Lord: Not every evil in Worship which displeaseth God, and distasteth the godly; but any evil of Worship which vitiateth the subject, and destroyeth the substance thereof, maketh a sufficient ground or reason for separation.

5. This rude and prophane ministration did not vitiate the subject, nullifie the sacrifice, nor derive guilt to the Sacrificers, who therefore with due devotion brought their Sacrifices to the Lord by such vile persons who ministred in this rude order.

So that on concession, That the Liturgy is a rude order of ministration, sinfully accustomed and imposed, to the displeasure of God, and distast of the godly, not reformed by those who have power, but its reformation desired, is refused and resisted; yet we find in Scripture an evil every way square, yea more hainous, in some special things, which

which yet constituted no *moral barr to communion*, or *necessary and good reason for separation from the Church*, or *worship of God*, truly existing by, or under the same.

The third thing I commend to your consideration for the clearing of this case, is this:

3. Rude Ministration is a personal guilt, and not derived to the people.

3. *Communion with the Church in the Worship of God, ministred by a rude and disorderly Liturgy,*

deriveth no sin or guilt to the people so communicating. I do not say, that there is *no sin in a rude and disorderly Liturgy*; or that the *Minister* that ministreth by it, is not *guilty of a sin in such ministration*; but that *communion in God's Worship, deriveth no guilt to the people communicating.* There may be a *sin*, the guilt of which may be derived to every *Agent*, but not to any *passive Subject*; none I suppose can or will deny this. I shall not now judg what *disorders* exist in any *Liturgy*; nor do I appear an *Advocate for any rudeness*; but taking all for true which an *over-scrupulous Conscience* and *ensorious Spirit* will or can urge, I shall endeavour to evidence such *sin* is not the *people's guilt*, by these *Demonstrations* clear in, and to all *Casuits*.

1. The true *Worship* of God ministred in and by the *Liturgy*, not the *order of ministration*, is the *due, proper, and adequate object* of the people's devout attendance: attendance on *false Worship* doth involve in *guilt* all so attending; but not attendance on *true Worship* unduly ministred, and disorderly exhibited: The people may not without sin attend the *Sacrifices*, or *Worship of Idols*; nor any *false Worship* exhibited to the true God: because these are the *common concern of the Church*; and all that attend the same, appear *worshippers therein*, and thereby. If the *Priests* would, *Israel* might not worship the *Calf* at *Horeb*, *Baal*, or *Ashteroth*, the Gods of the *Heathen*; nor at the *High Places*, or *Altar* built conform to that at *Damascus*; nor yet attend *Aarons Sons* offering *false fire* to the Lord. The *Corinthians* might amicably attend any *Feast*; but attending a *Feast sacrificed to Idols*, and so known to themselves, made them *partakers of the Table and Cup of Devils*: But *God's Worship* truly administered by the *lawful Ministrations of Eli's sons*, would not involve the *Sacrificers* in the guilt thereof. The *Worship* doth immediately concern the *whole Church*; but the *Ministerial Mode* appertaineth to, is charged on, and must be answered by the Minister,

ster, thereby exhibiting the same between God and his people. *Worship* cannot be exhibited without a *Ministerial Mode*: that *Mode* is wholly charged on the *Minister*: the *Church* is no otherwise concerned, than in committing the *Ministry* to men of *Gifts and Prudence*, fit for the exhibition of the same: the *Worship*, not the *Ministerial Mode*, is the adequate object of the people's adoring-presence. Men come to Church to pray, to hear, to receive *Sacraments*, not to attend the abstracted *Ministerial Mode*, which is wholly personal to him who ministrETH. What mad men will suppose *Israel* brought their Offering to see the ravenous and rude *Ministrations* by which *Eli's Sons* managed them before the Lord? The *Institution* of God, not the *Administration* of men (subject to error, rudeness, and disorder), is the object of our faith and fear: Our *Amen* is given to the desire of things, according to God's will, asked in the name of *Christ*; not the sawcy, rude, wild, and irreverent wording of such desires, the result of Human *Ministration*. That nothing human must be used in God's Church, or about God's *Worship*, is an error which will soon exclude all solemn outward adoration of God; for God's *Worship* is, and must be celebrated in the Church, by the *Ministry* of men. Men
are

are subject to *error, rudeness, and disorder*, in all their actions; the *act*, not the *order* of Ministration, is the *known object* of communion. When I feast with my Friend, the *meat*, not the *manner of preparing or presenting to my table or palate*, which may be *stuttish and rude*, which I may nauseate, is that in which I participate. In publick Societies, the *matter prayed and spoken*, not the *manner of speaking*, which may be *apt and eloquent, rude and confused*, in the *publick Orator*, is the *object of the people's attendance and acclamation*. The *Eloquence of the Oration*, is the *Orator's immediate glory*; the *Non-sense and Confusion*, is his *immediate shame*, and concern the people no ways, but by *reflection*, for setting up such an one: but the *matter*, as *good or bad, just or unjust*, doth *immediately concern the whole Society*. So it is in the *things of God*. Be not deceived; though in *act*, the *matter of Worship* cannot *exist* without the *human mode*; yet to *Faith and Reason* the *Worship ministred, and ministration of the Worship*, are as *clearly separable*, as the *Meat and Dish*, or *Cookery* at your Table; as the *good matter and rude manner of an Oration* in any *Orator*: and he whose scrupulous soul cannot in his publick communion *distinguish and divide these two*, must go to Heaven alone,

lone, and worship God alone: for all *ministration*, even that which is *extemporary*, and *conceived by personal abilities*, is *human*, and subject to *error*, *non-sense*, *rudeness*, and *irreverence* of expressions; the which gave occasion to the first use of *set-forms of prayer*, subjected to the view and correction of *fratrum doctiorum*, the more learned brethren. I cannot but admire at men's weakness in fencing against the *Liturgy* with those fears, which have a most cogent force for to necessitate them: for if the *people be involved in the guilt of rude and disorderly, irreverent expressions* of the Minister ministering, Is there not an *inevitable necessity* of a *standing Liturgy*, in which the *order and words* exhibiting Worship, do appear, and may be *judged* by the people before they come to publick Worship? Who can join with any man in prayer, if he see not before, that his prayer is *free* from the *rudeness, disorder, impertinencies, incongruities*, and *non-sense*, to which his nature and capacity may dispose him. When you ask, *Where hath God commanded a Liturgy?* Let me ask, *Where hath God charged the ministration of his Worship on the people?* Or charged any, save his Ministers, for the *rudeness or disorder* thereof? Nor is there any force in that plea, That the
rude

rudeness and disorder in the Ministration, is *before-hand known* (so was the prophane Ministration of the Sops of *Eli*, as is before noted): for if you are involved in the *guilt* of Ministration, you are as *truly*, though not so *greatly* guilty, in communicating in an *unknown*, as in a *known rude* ministration, when it doth exist; and so must on all occasions flye out of the Church.

2. Whatsoever rudeness and disorder of Ministration is in, or by the Liturgy, it is not the *act* of the people, but the *personal act* of the Minister *ministering by the same*. The sinful *action* becomes *guilt* immediately to the *Agent*, and is not the *immediate guilt* of others, whose the action is not. We all know, *administration* is not the *act* of the people, or private men: God hath established an *office* of publike Ministry in, and to his Church; and *gifteth persons* for the management thereof. It is the work of Ministers, in *due order*, with *reverence* and *gravity*, to *modifie God's Worship*, and exhibit it to his Church; in which his care must be, to the utmost of his discretion, to avoid all things *inconsistent* to Divine Majesty, *incongruous* to so holy duties, and *offensive* to God's people: But this neglected, and these things happening, the sin remaineth

maineth *personal*, the Minister must answer for it. God never *did* or *will charge* ministrations of Ministration *on the people*. If *Eli's* Sons in this case transgress, let the *house* of *Eli* look to it. *Israel* may be grieved under so great disorders in their Ministration; but they *fear not any contraction of guilt*, by bringing their Sacrifices to God by so rude hands.

It seemeth unto me a most wild and strange notion, with which some deter themselves and others from God's Worship, in the communion of the Church, viz. That it is *æque*, if not *equaliter*, all one to attend on, as to administer by a rude and disorderly Liturgy; as if the capacity of a *Christian*, and common member of the Church, were no way different from the capacity of a *publike Minister*; and the duties, offices, actions of each capacity, were not distinct from the other, but both were confounded. What man of reason and sobriety, doth not see and know, *truth of Worship* is the object of a common adoring presence; and the people's attendance is on the things of God ministered; in the Ministration they are purely passive; have no action, nor care of action: it is a *vehiculum*, Mode of exhibition of the things of God, prepared by those who are called, and

and qualified for, and charged with the same: whereas the external mode, as well as truth of Worship, is charged on the Minister; his duty is, not only to see Worship truly exist; but also that it be duly, gravely, and orderly exhibited, in a Ministerial mode, proper to so weighty a work, and delightful to God's people attending the same. The specialty of the Minister's Office, is modification of Divine Worship between God and his people; for this end he received gifts from God; unto this work he is called; with this office he stands charged; and all defects and disorders therein, reflect guilt on him, and on him alone. What mad man will say, It is all one to feed on good food ill dressed, and rudely presented to the Table; and to cook it ill, and rudely serve it up; or it is all one to attend and assent unto the just and weighty desires of a Society or Corporation rudely, confusedly expressed by their publike Orator; and with rudeness, nonsense, and disordered expressions, to play the Orator, and speak out such just desires: whilst the different capacities of men, are not distinguished; and the distinct duties offices of each capacity are not discerned, it is no wonder if it seem an *Ænigma*, and *proprium dogma*, to affirm, I may, I must attend God's Worship ministred by a Minister-

rial mode, by which I could not without sin minister it. The common capacity of a Christian makes me wholly passive as to the Ministerial mode of Worship, which is charged on an Officer appointed to that purpose: but the special Office of a Minister, engageth me to personal action, and peculiarly chargeth me with the modification of God's Worship; to put it in such words and order of expressions, as may most edifie, and make acceptable the things of God, according to that measure of prudence and discretion which God hath given me. Herein I am not hindred from receiving a mode prescribed by another; but as a Minister, I am a Judge of the order or disorder of that Mode, and by my discretion accepting and acting by it, I make it my own personal administration, and become personally guilty of all that ineptitude, irregularity, rudeness, or disorder, which is in any such prescribed mode. Every Age of the Church hath complained of the rudeness, impertinencies, incongruities, schism, and disorder of Ministers in publike Ministrations: but what Age of the Church ever suggested or supposed them to be the actions, or charged the guilt of them on the people? I would not acquit any soul from the least sin whereof he is the proper subject. Nor must you

scru-

scrupulously fancy to your selves a guilt; where you are charged with; and perform no action; the one will not more strengthen iniquity, than the other deter from positive indispensable duty.

3. An Adoring-presence at the Worship of God, exhibited by a rude and disorderly Ministration, groeth no participation of the guilt. Men may by consequence participate of guilt, who are not directly to be charged with the sin, and cannot be found the immediate Agent of the sinful act; this we must needs grant: but the participation of the guilt of the Minister's undue Ministration, is without any good reason dreaded; nay, by some charged on the peoples attendance on Gods true Worship so ministered; which indeed cannot be any way derived unto them; and that because attendance on solemn publike Worship, is a positive and indispensable duty, which rudeness and disorder will not barr or supersede; and the people have not an authoritative judgment of the Minister and his Ministration, whereby to reprove and correct, and so prevent such rude Ministration. The necessity of duty, and want of authority to correct a disorder, stateth the people in an absolute immunity of participating in the guilt of his action, who ministrereth between them and

God. The sacrifices of Israel must be brought unto the Lord, that is necessary, positive duty, not to be restrained, because of the rudeness of Eli's Sons; Though Eli had Israel wanted an authority to correct and restrain the rude Administration of these Priests, they therefore brought their Offerings, when they loathed to see how rudely they were used. God's Word must be heard, and his Name be called on in the Congregations of his people; nor will rude, wild, incongruous expressions, and disorder, intercept so positive a duty. We have indeed Judgment of discretion, that may, and must engage to dislike, distaste, and grieve for, and (as we have opportunity) modestly complain against such rudeness and disorder, but we want authority and power to correct and restrain the same. That such are suffered so to minister before the Lord, is the sin of Eli, the Fathers of the Church, who may, but do not reform it; but the people's necessitated attendance on such Worship, so ministered, contracts no guilt, connivance, and approbation of an evil in others, cannot exist in such who are dyed with Authority, Judgment, and Power of correction and prevention.

Upon the whole of this case, well weighing with our selves, that what ever rudeness

ness or disorder is or can be objected against the Ministrations of God's Worship, the Worship doth truly exist the Lord's; the people are not, and so are not immediately guilty of the rudeness and disorder of Ministration: and the necessity of duty, with want of Authority to correct and restrain such rudeness, interdicts all participation of guilt. We have reason to conclude, Rudeness and disorder in Ministration, will not make a moral bar to communion, nor warrantable ground for separation.

The common cry, That the Liturgy was taken out of the Popish Mass-Book, and was declared to be the Mass That the Service-book was taken out of the Mass, it followeth not that it is therefore devised and false Worship; for many things contained in the Mass-book it self, are sound good and holy: if it were wholly taken out of the Mass-book, how cometh it to have in it those things which are so direct contrary to the Mass: it is more proper to say, the Mass-book was added to the Liturgy, to our Common Prayer, than that

our Common-Prayer was taken out of the Mass-book, as in the 2d page.

which therein accompany them: yet Mr. Ball doth well note against the Brownists, That *Liturgies were of use before the Mass-book; and that the Liturgy is the restoring of the ministration of God's Worship to such order, as was before the Mass was added.* But however it was (to appease the fury of an heady-multitude, acted by a blind zeal into horrid Rebellion) pleaded (as a piece of policy) to be the *Mass in English*; it is apparent that it is *no such thing*; and above all, be it what it will, or whence it will, we cannot deny but God's true Worship is *truly*, though not so *orderly* exhibited in and by it; and so, as that our *first Reformers* did not only *rejoyce in it*, but with much zeal *use it, attend it, plead for it, and suffer for it*, in opposition to the *Roman Service, and order of Ministration.* What shall we say of Reverend Ridley, Hearty Hooper, Sincere Sanders, Trusty Taylor, and most Brave Bradford, with the whole *Cloud of Witnesses*, who not only *served God by the Liturgy to their last breath, even in their most personal and dying-devotions*; but also *suffered for so doing*, having the same objected against them by their Persecutors; and also *pressed the people, and their choicest Friends, to adhere to it, and serve God by it, as delivered from those*

those three great evils of the Mass-book :

1. *Worship ministred in an unknown Tongue.*
 2. *Mingled with manifest Idolatry.* 3. *The mark of Antichrist,* and a subjection to the *Universal Headship* of the Pope. And however some *succeeding Christians* have desired some *reformation of the Liturgy*, they have constantly and with due devotion served God in the use thereof, and defended the same against the *censorious Brownist* and *rigid Separatist*, herein (like *Sampson's Foxes*) joining tails to hold the Fire-brands which may put God's Church into a combustion and disorder; and charging the *English Service* with *Hereſie*, nay *Idolatry*; at one breath condemning the generation of the *Just*.

Nor is their *Charity* saved, nor our *Conclusion* weakned, by pleading these *holy Martyrs*, and *good men*, did act according to their

See Bradford's Letters.

light, in the first dawnings of *Reformation*, and coming out from *Papery* and *Babylon*: for though I confess, the *beginning* and *progreſs* of *Reformation* are *different capacities*, and charge *different duties*; I do not think it commendable, that men haſtitate in *first degrees of holineſs* in themselves, or *purity and order* in the *Ministrations of God's Worship*, they ought to go

forward to perfection: yet this must be noted, That *first Reformation had the perfection of substance*, though not of *quantity* and *degree*: God's *true Worship* was restored to a *right order* (though not so fully orderly) of *Ministration*. The Ordinances of God did then exist *truly*, as to their *substance* and *essential form*; and *salvably*, as to their *Ministerial Mode* towards the people; for otherwise those holy men had not wherein to *rejoyce before God and the World*. If we therefore following after, and desiring perfection of *degree*, stick in, or backslide to the *first obtained Reformation*; we must yet in this rejoyce, give glory to God, and keep the communion of the Church; that though we do not, we yet cannot *advance to desired degrees of Reformation*: yet we enjoy God's *true Worship*, *salvably ministred*, though with some things and orders which *distaste* us; nothing that can *destroy*.

6. Ceremonies no ground for Separation.

Sixthly: *Ceremonies of human invention, super-added to God's Worship, make not a sufficient ground and reason for Separation.*

Though some do, and will stoutly defend the *super-adding* some few Ceremonies (apt to signify) to *God's Worship*; and the Churches

Churches Authority so to do; I am in that case no Advocate; nor is it my present business to dispute it: but supposing it true, that some significant Ceremonies are unwarrantably added to God's Worship, and made appendants to it; I do affirm, they do not constitute any good reason or sufficient warrant for separation; nor will acquit from Schism such who on this cause withdraw from the Communion of the Church.

What serious Christian consulting the Scriptures, will not find *Posts set up by God's Posts*, Altars besides *his Altars*, High Places Corrivalls with *God's holy Temple*; and the very *Image of Jealousie* set up in the Temple of the Lord, provoking God to come down from the Mercy-seat to the door of the Temple; and yet his people in good manners waiting the Lord's motion, did not depart the House so long as the symbols of his presence did there abide.

Who, reading Scripture, seeth not the many Ceremonies our Saviour found added to his Father's Worship? With what burdens did not the Scribes and Pharises burden the people? How many were their Traditions which made the Word of God of none effect? All which our Saviour reproved; yet neither separated himself from the communion of the Jews Church, nor advised

sed his Disciples so to do, till the Vail of the Temple being rent, the presence of God was withdrawn.

The foundation of the Christian Church was scarce settled, before *Ceremonies* abounded in it; *Sufflations, Exorcisms, Unctions, Cream, Spittle, the Linnen stole,* all added

Ipsam religionem quam paucissimis, & manifestissimis celebrationum Sacramentis, misericordia Dei Liberam esse voluit: servilibus oneribus premunt: ut tolerabilior sit conditio Iudæorum qui legalibus sarcinis, non humanis præsumptionibus subjiuntur. *August. Epist. ad Januar.*
119.

to Baptism. *Ceremonies, Human Presumptions*, as *Austin* calls them, swarmed in, and were severely imposed on the ancient Church, which made the *Gospel* a more heavy burden than the *Law*; yet no Separation from thence inferred: and *St. Austin* most ingenuously sensible of this evil,

grieved for it; and his own silence concerning them, was the very Mall of Schism, and earnest disswader of, and deborter from Separation.

The reason hereof is not far to seek, new, or obscure; these super-added Ceremonies are extrinsick to God's Worship; they enter not into it; nor do they any way vitiate the subject, destroy and nullifie God's Ordinance or Worship, but it existeth and remaineth God's true Worship; and extrinse-

cal

cal corruptions none will say can constitute a sufficient reason for separation. The tender Casuist maketh indeed *Human Institutions*, when they are made *intrinsic* to God's Worship, to lye out of the reach of any approbation.

Humana Instituta si sint cultui extrinseca, approbari possunt. Si vero intrinsicè pertineant ad cultum nullo modo debent approbari. Ames. Cas. Conf. lib. 4. 24.

But some things *extrinsic* may be approved; and what may not be approved, yet will not warrant separation. The holy place doth not lose its holiness, because the *High Places* are not taken away. The Temple of the Lord is not to be presently prophaned, because the *Image of Jealousie* stands erected near the Ark of the Covenant. Nor is God's Altar to be pull'd down, because the Altar at *Damascus* is nigh unto it. A super-added *Cross* in which the subject is wholly passive, destroyeth not the *Sacrament of Baptism*, any more than *Oyl* and *Cream*, and other old appendants to that Sacrament. Nor doth a *white Garment* (how holy soever some, or *handsome* others think it) make the Minister *no Minister*, or his Ministration *void*. We do not say, super-added Ceremonies may be *lawfully imposed* on, or acted by any; but where they are so, they remaining *distinct* from, not *confounded* with

with God's Worship; extrinsecal, not vitiating any Institution of Christ, but that the same doth fully, formally exist; they make not any sufficient reason for separation.

7. Mixt Congregations; 8. Neglect of Discipline, no cause of separation.

The seventh and eighth things which I find to have been pleaded to justify separation from the Church, is,

The Congregations are of a mixed company; some good, and many very bad: and Discipline is neglected; so that the precious are not separated from the vile. And to both these I affirm:

That the mixture of Members, and neglect of Discipline, is no good ground, nor sufficient warrant for separation from the Church.

These two I join in one, because dependent each on other, as the distempering disease, and neglect of Physick. And the truth of our Assertion is so manifest, that it could never be withstood by the severest Separatists that have been. In Christ's Church are and will be not only hypocrites, but persons visibly prophane: Christ hath declared by the Parable of the Field, containing Corn and Tares; the Floor, in which is Corn and Chaff; and the Fisher's Net, in which are Fishes good and bad; and bran-

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ches in the Vine which bear not fruit; that thus it would be: and we find not a Church mentioned in all the New-Testament, in which it was not thus. How notoriously vile, lewd, and prophane, were many in *Corinth*; Erroneous, sensual, and carnal, were many in *Galatia*, *Ephesus*, and others; Mr. Baxter in his late pious and serious Considerations about the Cure of Church-divisions, hath by many Instances amplified: and it were easie out of *Antiquity* and *Modern Writers*, to multiply evidences, That the neglect of Discipline in the case of the manifest prophaneſs of Members, maketh not any good ground for separation from the Church. This hath been most convincingly, and beyond any contradiction argued of old against the *Cathurists*, *Nobattians*, and *Donatists* Schism; grafted on this stock: against the *Bromists* by the *Nonconformists* of old; and against the *Independents* by the late *Presbyters*; that he that is half-blind may run and read the verity thereof. I shall therefore detain you no longer in the debate hereof, but dismiss this Reason with the resolution of the *New England Divines*, the most competent Judg of *Old England's Separations*, that the Separatists can appeal to: and their Platform of Discipline (Cap. 14. Sect. 8, 9.) doth declare,

declare, *The suffering of prophane and scandalous Livers to continue in the Church, and partake of the Sacrament, is doubtless a great sin; yet the godly are not presently to separate from it, nor to abstain from communion with such a Church, in the participation of the Sacrament. Christ and his Apostles in their times, and the Prophets and other godly in theirs, did lawfully partake of the Lord's commanded Ordinances in the Jewish Church; and never taught nor practised separation from the same, though unworthy ones were permitted to be therein. And*

*Holiness of Church-Members, p. 2.
Infant-Baptism, p. 56.*

Mr. Cotton (that Oracle of the Congregationalists) doth conclude, "The Hypocrisie of sundry Members of the Church, and toleration of some open scandal, doth not take away the nature of the Church; nor is separation to be presently made from it; the faithful in the Church of *Corinth*, wherein were many unworthy persons and practises, were never commanded to absent themselves from the Sacrament; therefore the godly in like cases may not separate.

9. Relapses after Covenant, is no ground for separation.

Ninthly, *A relapse into evil, and defection from Reformation, after a solemn*

leem Now and Covenant to endeavour it to the utmost of our power, is not a sufficient ground, or justifiable reason for separation from the Church. It is not more manifest in Scripture, that God's Israel returning from their evils under good Kings, did bedg up themselves by most serious and solemn Oaths; than it is also, that after they had so sworn, and rejoiced in the Oath of God, they did relapse, make defection, and apostatize; for which God often brands them with that black Epithet, *Back-sliding Israel*; yet separations are no where found: for indeed, although *back-sliding against sacred Obligations*, is a very great evil, and most grievous sin; yet the evils into which they fall back, in the nature of them, not the evil of *back-sliding*, maketh the ground and reason of separation: things destructive to the being of the Church, and Worship of God in it, make a just ground of separation before and after apostacy, or defection under a solemn Covenant; but a *back-sliding* against the most publike and solemn Oath, in the greatest of disorders and evils consistent with the truth of God's Church and Worship: though it grievously provoke God, and grieve every serious Soul, sensible of the obligation of an Oath; yet it never did, never will, never can make a
ground

ground for separation from the Church.

The Oath and Covenant with which many among us do in this case groundlessly perplex themselves and others, many deny to have been *lawful* or *obliging*, and so seek to break the *bonds* by which Souls stand bound to God; such men shall in this case walk alone for me. I see no need of so loose a resolution of *Conscience* in the case of separation; and therefore allowing the utmost of its *obliging-force* with which any can conceive their Souls to be bound, I earnestly desire a sober and serious consideration of these things, in the matter of such an Oath.

I. It obligeth all subjected to it, to *most endeavours of Reformation*. Reformation and Separation, though by the *groundless calumnies* of the Enemies to the one, and by the *rash inconsiderate zeal* of the other, they are confounded, as if *synonymous* words of the same signification, and acts of the same nature and operation; yet they are in themselves *vastly different*, and indeed *inconsistent* and *destructive* each to other, as much as is the *cleansing* and *casting away* a Vessel; the *purging* and *parting from* an House: in which cases the one is an act of duty, the other of *iniquity* destructive to that duty. Schisms in the Church, are disgraceful

graceful and *distracting*; but *Schisms from the Church* are by all, that know their nature and operation, judged *destructive to the Churches* not only *Peace and Order*, but *Being it self*. The Prophets and Apostles were ever zealous for *Reformation*; but they never directed nor practised *separation* from any true Church, on the account of any evil consistent with God's true Worship, existing in the same. Who knoweth not, that the House forsaken, is determined not habitable and secure, and so is designed for ruin; whereas the House to be cleansed, is continued in? What Reproach, what Remora to Luther's Reformation, did the separation of the German Anabaptists occasion? How was our late Reformation retarded, until ruined by the separation of Congregationalists, whose practise plainly proclaimed, *building new Churches*, not *reforming the old*, was their aim, design, and business? Let any pretending to Church-existence, allow *Separation* their own Law of *Rejection*, and keep their Church from confusion and ruin, if they can.

How do you *blaspheme* the Oath of God, by which you pretend to awe your Souls, when you make it a *Bond of Iniquity*? You have sworn *utmost endeavours of Reformation*,

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tion, and run into rash and groundless separation: You have covenanted with God and your selves, to endeavour the cleansing the Sanctuary; and very zealously you run from, and labour to ruin it; you renounce all care of it, and salvation in it: What Babel-Language? What Hellish-Work is this? By contradictions to build, and by sin to keep a Covenanted-duty? And therefore consider:

2. You have sworn your Endeavour of Reformation, to be in, to, and by the extirpation of Schism, equally with Superstition, Error, and Heresie: So that the Oath itself hath determined Reformation to be contradistinct to Separation; and Schism, which is a groundless Separation, to be an evil of an high nature, to be abhorred, to be extirpated by Reformation. Would you cloud your own Reason and Understanding, by interpreting the Oath, which awes you, against itself? It binds you to Reformation of the Church, unto the extirpation of Schism: you will needs be bound by it to reform, by running into the greatest Schism, and by raising the same to the greatest height ever practised in the Christian World, since that of the Donatists.

3. The

9. The Reformation covenanted, is to be done *in your Places and Callings*. Your Oath, which binds you to *reform*, binds you against *disorder* in your Reformation. You must do what *you can* to reform; but you must not in your endeavours *break order*, nor go out of your place: All endeavours of Reformation must be *lawful*, by *lawful means*, in a *lawful way and order*. God and his Church have no need of our sin. The *shaking of God's Ark*, will not allow an *Uzzah* to lay hands on it for its support. Publike Ministers may *inveigh* against, *reprove*, and *threaten* with God's anger, the disorders of the Church. Such as have the *sword of Justice in their hand*, must, and may *chastise the disorderly*; but if *Eli* neglected Discipline whilst *Samuel* speaks loudly, and presseth in the Name of the Lord a Reformation of the disorders of *Eli's Sons* in the things of God; the *Sacrificers* can only with modesty desire *the fat may be first burned*: The capacity of a private Christian is to sit in God's House *singing and praying* for the Covenanted Reformation. He that separates, runs from both the *Duty Covenanted Reformation* to the extirpation of Schism, and way to its discharge, the endeavour of it, according to our Places

and *Callings*. I cannot but observe with what dexterity and earnestness some plead the *Oath of God*, to spurr and strengthen the *sinful agitations* of men, who never did make conscience of keeping any *one part of it*, when cross to their *lusts* and *sinful designs*: they who have most *horribly violated it*, labour to improve it, as the *only bond of iniquity*: But if indeed we make conscience of it, let us rightly understand it, and we shall find, that the *defections of the Church from a Covenanted-Reformation*, is *not a ground for separation*: for, *Reformation in your places and callings*, unto the *extirpation of Schism*, is the thing you have sworn, and must perform to the Most High God: and this owneth *God's Church existent in the true Ministration of Christ the Mediator*; and our selves in the *union of it*, which we are bound to *hold in the bond of peace*, under all *desires and pursuits of purity*; against, yea unto the *extirpations of Schism*.

10. Exclusion of some Ministers, no cause of Separation.

10. The restraining some Ministers the publick and ordinary exercise of their Ministry, in some special places, and on some special reasons, will not be a sufficient ground for

for separation from the Church. Some laying much stress on the relation between Pastor and People; when the Minister is restrained the exercise of the Ministry, they break off from the communion of the Church, and embrace not the Minister who in his room ministreth to the Church; but resorting to the Minister who is restrained, they form themselves into contradistinct Assemblies, or Churches; and by his Ministration have the acts of solemn Worship celebrated among them: These being brought into suspicion of making a Schism not only in, but from the Church; do, to acquit themselves, plead, The relation of a Pastor and People is like that of a Man and his Wife, inseparable but by death; That the Church doth only cleave to their Pastor, who is unjustly inhibited his Ministry, but yet is under a necessity of preaching the Gospel; and judg this a most justifiable reason for their separations from the publike communion of the Church.

In answer to this Plea, some will be ready (I wish it were without reason) to deny the matter of fact, viz. That they who in contradistinct Assemblies resort unto private places for solemn publike Wor-

ship, are the Church cleaving to its Pastors; and they affirm, it is the late Pastor, making a Schism, into which some few of the Church are by him seduced: these urge, if Election be (as some affirm) of the institution to a Minister's Call; yet it must be the act of the major part of the Church orderly assembled; not of some few, personally following this or that Minister, according to particular fancy, without our consulting or calling together the whole Church or Congregation, whereof they were members; and the several Parishes have generally received other Ministers in the room of those who are removed; the persons following the restrained or removed Ministry, are but few of any one Parish; and those personally acting, not in any relation to, union with, and order towards the Church whereof they were Members: A way most apt to the Heretical heaping Teachers according to their itching-ears: So that if a view be taken of those many hundreds which flock after such Ministers, there will not be found many scores, if dozens, of those who in a constituted, orderly way, did lately call them Pastors, and were of their Parish; and amongst them, not one who had, or once endeavoured to have the suffrage of the Church lately

lately subject to his Ministration. So that the Minister and People who have condemned *self-constituted Churches*, do now exist a Church by the *same form*, or not at all; and that is no other than a *formal separation*. On this Plea I shall not stand; I could be glad more of *innocency* were in the *accused*, and less of *truth* in the *accusation*; for *pudeat hæc dici potuisse & non potuisse refelli*. But to the weight of the Plea it self, I must note:

I. I understand not the *inseparable relation between Pastor and a particular People or Congregation*, to be such as is between an *Husband and Wife*: I do not know any Scripture that doth set out and express the relation between *Pastor and People*, by that *emblem and inseparable relation in Nature*. *Paul* saith indeed, He had *betrothed the Corinthians to the Lord*; but that he betrothed them to *himself*, I find not. The Scripture usually setteth forth the relation of a Minister to the Church, by the emblem of a *Servant of the Spouse*, and *Minister for their good*, appointed them by their *Lord and Husband*: and however in some cases, The *care and affection*, singularity of *inspection* against Pluralities of

Benefices; or *constancy in Ministration*, against *Non-residents*, have been by many late Divines amplified by the *Husband's* affectionate *caring for*, and *cleaving to one* only *Wife*; yet we must know, that similitudes do not run of all four; they are used to amplify some one thing only, not that the things compared must be exactly square in every particular point.

Christ gave *Pastors* to his Church, as *Ministers* and *Servants to his Spouse*; these must *never leave* her; she must *never*, whilst personally distant from her Lord, be *without these*, to minister to her conditions: But *conveniency* only created the peculiar relations of a *particular Pastor*, and a *particular Parish or Congregation*: In the first Ages of the Church, as yet in some Reformed Churches, many *Presbyters* had the joint and common care of many *Congregations*; and no Congregation did know its *peculiar Pastor*. There was a time when the Church was not *distributed into Parishes*, nor *Parishes knew no peculiar Pastor*; but, as the great Antiquary noteth, the people paid their *Tithes to whom*, or what *particular Minister* they would. And Polydore Virgil saith, The Church was distribu-

Selden de Decimis.

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ted into *Parishes*, that *administration* might not be promiscuous. *Conveniency* is a good dictator of *politick order*, but not of *conjugal relation*; whereof were it admitted, more men would find a *conveniency* to leave their *Wives*, than *Ministers* to leave their particular *Parishes* or *Congregations*. That the Church have *Ministers*, is of *Divine Institution*; that *this Church* hath that *Minister*, is of *Human Institution*, influenced by *Reason* and *Prudence*, more than *Conscience* and *Piety*. But again:

The *Ministry* is fixed, permanent, and inseparable to the Church; but the *Minister* is, and ever was mortal, and his *Ministration* mutable; subject to, and capable of restraint and inhibition by men. The Church hath primarily the power of admitting or dismissing *Ministers* to or from the exercise of their *Ministry*; yet the *Magistrate* acknowledged to be *Custos utriusq; tabulae*, by the accident of his property to this and that place; and his power and *dominion* comes to be therein concerned; and in the circumstances of *hic & nunc*, have much interest, especially where he becometh Christian. The *High-Priest* amongst the *Jews*, was the most fixed *Minister* that ever the Church could enjoy, being

being a *Catholick Officer*, succeeding by *inheritance*, invested with a *power distinct from the Magistrate*, and estated for *term of life*; yet the exercise of his *Ministry* fell under the *Authority of the Magistrate*, insomuch that *Abiathar* (it's confessed) was justly put by his Office by King *Solomon*, and many after-Priests by the *Roman Power*, who made this Office *annual and mercenary*; insomuch that he who would give *most money*, might be *High-Priest* for one year, as I have before noted. Our Saviour, who *having all power in Heaven and Earth*, hath commissioned his Ministers to *go and teach all Nations*; hath yet commanded to have a *due regard to Human Order*, and submit the exercise of their Ministry to the *Domestick or Civil Authority* of such unto whom they should come and be under it. The same *Jesus* which sent out the *seventy Disciples to preach*, did direct their *motion* according to the reception it found in *Families and Cities*; and though he would his *Gospel* be tendred to *all*, he would not any violence be offered to any *Authority, or Human Order*. If the Master of the House *shut the door*, the Magistrates of the City *the Gates*; and, by analogy of reason, the *Governours of Kingdoms* their

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sea-Ports and publike places; and flatly re-
fuse to receive the Gospel; the will of
Christ was ever, in all Ages, by all Learn-
ed, Sober, and Serious men, understood to
be, that the Ministers of the Gospel must be
gone; and not against the interdict of any
lawful Authority, and just Proprietors, en-
force their Preaching of the Gospel: for the
weapons of our warfare are spiritual; but
Faction and Schism are carnal. None but
men Antichristianly acted, did, or would
ever presume an immunity of Clergy from
subjection to Natural or Civil Authority,
as to outward actions; much less when the
interdict is of Persons, Preachers, not of
Preaching, and the Gospel preached: If the
Governours of a Nation, for the security
of the peace of their Nation, declare,
Christ they own, him they will honour,
that he be preached among them; but such
who preach him in their Nation, must and
shall be so qualified, and submit to such
subscriptions and directions, as their Law
requireth; What sober man will deny, such
who cannot without sin yeeld to the secu-
rity demanded, must quietly desist their
publike Ministration, and rejoyce that Christ
is preached; that a Wise God by some
men's sin makes way to the keeping up
that publike profession.

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That the *exercise of the Ministry* by particular persons, is subject, pro hic & nunc, to *Superiors Ecclesiastical, Natural, and Civil*, cannot be denied. The *Ecclesiastical* may determine whether I *shall*, or shall not *minister* in, and to the Church: The *Natural and Civil* may and must determine, whether I *shall* be the man which shall minister to their *Family or People*. All *Superiors* should be careful that they be *just* in the restraint of the *exercise of the Ministry of any Ministers of the Gospel*, lest by *injury* to the person, they speak *envy to the Gospel*: but supposing them unjustly to *inhibit some Ministers exercise of their Mi-*

Tarnov. de Ministerio,
lib. 3. cap. 6.

nistry, Tarnovius doth determine from *Christ's Command*, before noted; from the *practice of the Apostles*, and all good men; the *Fathers of the ancient Church*; the *dishonour of the Gospel*, and *blasphemy of Religion*, which would otherwise ensue, the Minister even *unjustly restrained the exercise of his Ministry*, must quietly recede. Unto such as in such a case object the answer of *Peter and John* unto the *inhibition of the Jews*, *Whether we shall obey God or man*, judg ye: I say, it's worth their noting, that *Human Super-*
rions

riors Ecclesiastick or Civil, may proscribe Persons, which to them are *sui juris*; but they cannot proscribe Doctrine which is *juris alieni*; and this last was the case of those Apostles, who were entertained into the Synagogues, and allowed to preach; but were prohibited to speak or to preach in that Name of Jesus, which was the only matter of their Commission. It is inconsistent to faithfulness in the Minister, to be prescribed as to the matter of his Ministry given him in charge: but had the doors of the Houses, or gates of the City been shut against them, and it had been declared, Christ and his Name shall be preached by others His Ministers, but not by you; unless you will by such qualifications give us the security of our peace which we demand, you shall not here abide, or be the men who shall act the Ministry among us: Would they not in reverence to Human Order, have submitted the restraint of their personal actings, to the Authority restraining; and have rejoiced, that (without Schism) yet Christ was preached by others, though not by themselves? I considering their severe charge of subjection to Human Powers, cannot think that they would account their personal acting worth the suspicion and persecution

secution of a sedition. Preaching Christ, not preaching him by such men, was the contest of the first Age of the Gospel.

Paul's preaching the Gospel in Rome in his own hired-House, is well observed in the Scripture to have been done *non* forbidding; a liberty *Hippertius, Zegger. Rist. enjoyed voce revuente Senator, & alii.* *natu, nec prohibente Imperatore,* say Expositors; importing, that they having forbidden, he must have retrenched the same.

And such as cry, *Wo unto us if we preach not the Gospel;* must consider: The faithfulness in the Office, not pertinacy in exercising it, must exempt from that *Wo*: Men are to pray, and Ministers to preach, *semper*, but not *ad semper*, a certain Rule: The Office binds all the Subjects to a constant promptitude to Ministration, but not to Ministration at all times, in all places, by any means of rudeness, disorder, schism, or sedition. When a Natural or Moral barr doth intercept our action, we may with confidence appeal to God; Lord, I would preach; but the sickness of my Body, or sinful terms im-

imposed by the men under whose Authority thou hast placed me, would not allow me so to do: *Thy Name is preached*, and therein I rejoyce: I, *in honour to thy Name, and obedience to Authority*, do not preach it, and doubt not but thou wilt accept my desire, and shew mercy to my *restrained exercise* of the Office to me entrusted.

So long as the Church doth *truly exist*, and the Mediatorship of Christ is *truly ministred* by *lawful Ministers*; that some are secluded from *ministring the same*, will be no warrant for *separation* from the Church, much less of *gathering counter-assemblies*, and managing *counter-ministrations*; in which discontent appearing the ground, *Schism* from the Church, with *sedition* in the Republick, must needs be suspected to enform the action, especially where *Domestick Liberty* indulged, with some *society of Christian Neighbours*, men will in despite of *Authority* strive to be the *persons* which will most openly, to great multitudes, preach the Gospel, as if the Gospel could not be preached by *any* but them; nor by them, without *multitudes of Auditors*; and that they

they owe no *duty to Authority* in the exercise of their Ministry. Preaching is a good ground of *Martyrdom*; but I wish men may find comfort in the Contest, that they must in this place be the men.

CAP.

C A P. IX.

*Concluding the whole Work, with a serious
Exhortation to Union and Communion
with the Church.*

HAVING enquired into the true and due nature of *Schism*, to the acquitting such as are therewith unjustly charged; and the conviction of those who having *fallen into it*, study by *unusual pleas* to acquit themselves from so *grievous guilt*; and all their pleas on a due discussion being found *insufficient* to warrant their *separation*: What now remains, but to conclude with a serious Exhortation unto professed Christians, now *fallen into a threefold capacity*?

First, Unto such who are called Christians, but never *were united to the Church of Christ*.

Secondly, To such who having been united to the Church, have *divided themselves from the communion thereof*.

Thirdly, To such who united to the Church, do as yet *hold communion with it*.

First, Unto such who are called Christi-

ans, but were *never united to the Church*: I cannot but seriously exhort them, With *earnest affection*, and *utmost care and diligence*, seek *union with the Church*, and hold *the communion of it*, according to Christ's Institution.

Some may suppose this to be an apt and proper Exhortation to be sounded in the ears of *Turks, Jews, and Pagans*; but needless and impertinent to *men called Christians* and living among us under that *common repute*: But alas! the *prophaness* of some *Parents*, with *Esaú* despising their *Birth-right*, hath made it most *necessary*, and provoketh all God's Ministers to *press with earnestness* this Exhortation: for though God hath been so gracious, as to extend the *Covenant of Christ's Mediatorship*, to *believers and their seed*; and to make the *branches of the Gentiles* to partake of the *fatness of the Olive*; and the Church in all Ages hath been so *courteous*, as to know *Infants* to be her Members, and allow them to be incorporated by Baptism; such hath been the prevalence of *Antipedobaptism*, that many among us have disowned their own and their Childrens *Infant-interest* in the *Covenant*, and the *initiating Seal thereof, Baptism*: so that many *adult persons* both
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may, and are under a necessity of doing what is storied to have been done by *Rumball*, at *Brackley* in *Northampton-shire*; of whom it is reported, that he spake as soon as he was born; and professing himself a Christian, requested, or rather required to be baptized; which was instantly done. Sure I am, many among us, whose prophane Parents not only neglected, but contemned the baptizing them whilst *Infants*, have lived to a full age unbaptized, and so *aliens to the Commonwealth of Israel*, I mean the Christian Church; and must now be perswaded to seek union, before they can be perswaded to hold communion with the Church. Let such be exhorted, seriously to speed their Baptism, bewailing their Parents and their own affliction, in being so long estranged to the Covenant of God, and communion with his people. Consider, oh consider, the Church is *Christ's Body*, and Baptism is the bond by which individual members are united to it; we are all baptized into one body; this is the only door of admission into God's House; this is the laying hold on God's Covenant, without this we cannot be accounted the people of the living God; we cannot enjoy the Mi-

See *Cambd. Britan.* in
Northamptonshire.

nistrations of Christ the Mediator, nor lay claim to the Covenant of Grace, and Priviledges thereof; nor appear in any possibility of salvation. It was the practice of the primitive times (and seemeth needful to be revived among us) to dismiss the upbaptized from Church-Priviledges, with a cry of *Sacra sacris, Holy things for holy men:* all

The Virtue and Value of Baptism.

which, I have long since amplified in a Discourse purposely written to provoke this very duty. I wish all concerned would read it; and seeing they who *love the Lord Jesus*, must with care *live in communion* with his Church; with all speed sollicite *union with, incorporation into the Church*, by being baptized.

The second Exhortation is to such who have been *united to*, and sometimes have *enjoyed sweet communion with the Church*, but are now *divided from it*, and live in *contradistinct Assemblies*, under the *seeming-Ministrations* of Christ the Mediator; and to them I say, in the Name and Fear of the Lord, *Return, O Shulamite; Return, return; repent and do thy first works; remember whence you are fallen; and follow the footsteps of the Flocks of Christ's true Church, before ye be too much prostituted to the*
Flocks

Flocks of his Companions: You see the *nature and sinfulness of Schism*, and *weakness and insufficiency of pretended Pleas for Separation*, to acquit from the guilt thereof. Oh consider the shame and sadness of *self-excommunication*: it is in event all one to *leap out*, or be *cast out* of the Ark of Salvation: but it is a *most grievous aggravation* that our ruin is *directly* and immediately *of our selves*. These things having been before largely discoursed, I forbear again to amplify; only entreat you, as you will approve your *love to Christ*, return to the *unity*, to the *communion with His Church*, from which you have groundlessly departed.

The third and last Exhortation is to such who yet *live in the communion of the Church*: Let such be exhorted to *hold fast what they have*, that no man take their *Crown*; to hold the *unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*; to cleave to Christ their *Head*, by *close and constant communion* with the Church *His Body*. Let not every *distast* drive from the *fellowship of the Saints*; nor *disorder* in the *ministration of holy things*, make them to *abhor the Offerings of the Lord*; take heed of healing your grief for God's dishonour, by the *guilt of Schism*: let love to Christ and his Church, *cover a multitude of sins*; and

and work *patience and forbearance* towards many *defects and disorders*: Use your judgment of *discretion*; but charge not the guilt of those things on your Souls, which you have not *authority to amend*. Let not the fear of a *feigned guilt*, force you from a *real, positive, and indispensable duty*; know that you *strengthen not the hand in sin*, which you have not a power to *restrain*; and zeal to *reformation* is then transported, when it runs men on *separation* from the Church. As you *love Christ*, live with *meekness, sobriety, charity*, in *careful constant communion with the Church of Christ*; making our Text, in all cases of doubt about it, your daily prayer, *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest them rest at noon: for why should I be as one who turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?*

These things might all have been digested into so many *distinct Directions*, and enlarged to a great Volume; but I have already enlarged beyond my intention: and this is lately done to our hands, with many other *pious and good Rules*, necessary to be known and practised, for the *cure of Church-Divisions*; by the Pious and Reverend Mr. Baxter; unto the reading whereof, I refer you.

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